THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

PROBABLY the most urgent question of home policy before the country to-day is that of Religious Education. We profess to be fighting broadly for Christendom, for the liberty and decency and moral standards which are the fruit of Christianity, and which cannot persist apart from the Christian Faith. But how many of our people realize this or understand what Christianity is and implies? If liberty is to survive, if honour, truth, and equity are to endure, we must see to it that the gospel out of which they spring is imparted to the generation on whom the responsibility for the future will rest.

This is being widely realized. It was the burden of the Archbishop of York's Malvern Conference. And lately two famous educationists have drawn special attention to it. One of them was Headmaster of Rugby, the Bishop of Liverpool, Dr. DAVID.[1] The other, Sir Cyril NORWOOD, was Headmaster of Harrow. Let us begin with Dr. DAVID. In a letter to the *Church Times* he deals with two points. First, he believes that the Government are willing to give religious instruction its proper place in the national system, but they dread a recurrence of sectarian controversy. If churchmen of all shades could go to them as a united body and assure them that the situation has entirely changed since 1902, that we no longer insist on a body of special doctrine being given to the children, they would probably (so we interpret Dr. DAVID) agree to make religious instruction mandatory in all schools with, of course, a conscience clause.

Dr. DAVID'S second point is that the centre of gravity of all education has changed in our days. It is the child that is the deciding factor, and the child decides that he needs the 'elements' of truth, not the developed form. We teach the child according to his stage of development. And when he is young it is not formulated doctrine he needs. That is why teaching religion by a catechism to young children is unscientific and futile. Doctrine comes later. This, Dr. DAVID says, 'has created a preparatory stage on which the churches can build their own full doctrinal instruction later on when the child is able to receive it. Thus the whole question is taken out of the reach of theological discussion and is set where it can be handled by practical teachers in peace.'

Sir Cyril NORWOOD in the February *Fortnightly* has the place of honour for an article on 'Some Aspects of Educational Reconstruction.' He takes a different line from Dr. DAVID. He begins with a definition of war aims. He says (1) we are fighting for our lives, and (2) we are fighting to decide on what conditions life on this earth will continue. He stresses the enormous power and resources which the allies will possess after the war, and insists that we must not compromise or let slip, for on the unchallengeability of these resources depends the well-being of Europe.

[1] Since this note was written Dr. David, at our request, has developed his views on Christian Doctrine and the Child in an article (page 255).—ED.

He points to the danger of an uncontrolled democracy, and this leads him straight to the problem of fitting the victorious democracy for its task of reconstruction and healing. And this problem of fitness is the problem of education. Sir Cyril is not dealing in his article only with religious education, but with proposals for reform of the educational system generally. With these we need not concern ourselves here, suggestive and important as they are. We take him up at the point where he contends that Christianity must be the foundation of the 'new order' in Europe, and 'it is obvious' that, if that is so, it must be the foundation of the education which is given in the schools.

The controversies of the past resulted in many people growing up without any religious teaching at all. But the position is not so desperate as it seems. For, while parsons and laymen have been contending with one another in abusing the Church during the last twenty years, the voices have been few indeed which have abused the teachings of Christianity. 'There has probably never been a time when there were more people ready to accept the ethical content of the Christian gospel as the highest revelation of what is possible for man. . . . Moreover, grim and disastrous as the present war is from every materialist point of view, it may well through suffering and through sacrifice bring the whole nation to a sense of the spiritual values which supremely matter.'

'Therefore,' Sir Cyril continues, 'I believe that in schools of every type the Gospels should be carefully taught, with the main emphasis placed upon their ethical teaching, that there should be regular school prayers and one day in the year set apart for a service of commemoration and dedication in special surroundings. The business of the school is to teach that goodness, truth, and beauty are absolute values, and every course of study in the school should be so taught as to illustrate these lessons; the life of the school should be designed and lived as something governed by these standards, a life in which example would always count for more than precept.'

'Doctrines and denominational distinctions are the business of the Church, the home and the Sunday school. They will count for less in the future than they have done in the past. But they are important, and it cannot be required of the schools, when the limited time at their disposal and the tender age of their pupils are taken into consideration, that they should do more than lay the foundation, and put first things first.'

It will be seen that in the pages which he devotes to religious education Sir Cyril ranges himself with the Bishop on the three main points. First, both insist that the 'elements' come at the early stage, and 'doctrine' only after the foundation has been laid. Secondly, that formulated doctrine is the affair of the Church. What is wanted to begin with is that children should be taught the simple truth to be found in the Person and Words of Jesus Christ, the 'absolute values' which His life and death embody.

And thirdly, that this people will not be equipped to undertake the task which victory will lay upon them unless they are taught what Christianity is and what its main ethical implications are. Is it too much to expect that the churches will go to the Government on the basis of these suggestions, and present to the authorities an agreed standpoint? And is it too much to hope that on this basis of agreement the Government will decree that religious education shall be really national, that a nation which has fought for the 'absolute values' shall have them taught to every child in every school?

In these columns notice is taken of theological views belonging to all schools of Christian thought. The only stipulation is that the expositions should be from competent hands. We would call attention here to a book published on the older lines of Christian apologetics by Dr. Wilbur M. Smith, of the Department of English Bible, Moody Bible Institute.

The Supernaturalness of Christ (Wilde Co., Boston; $1.50) is not only an affirmation of the

traditional orthodoxy but has the merit of affirming it in clear view of the objections to which it is subject. We do not think that the writer realizes the force of the objections in every case, but we respect his standpoint and appreciate his sincerity.

The scope of the work is indicated in the statement that the author seeks to set forth the basic facts involved in the Birth, the Transfiguration, the miraculous acts, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that his aim is to vindicate the view of Jesus Christ as a truly supernatural person, the Son sent by the Father to be the Saviour of the world. It may be noticed that an unusual emphasis is laid upon the Transfiguration.

The longest chapter treats of the miraculous works of Christ, and we shall now give a résumé of its main contents. First we are reminded of the characteristics of the miracles recorded in the Gospels. They appear to be organic to the Gospel narratives. The records of them are marked by reasonableness and restraint. They were done publicly and could be appraised by the physical senses. Nor are they being repeated to-day by modern science. They were performed out of high and worthy motives, and their importance was emphasized by Christ Himself.

Then are set forth theories proposed to account rationalistically for the miracles. The fraud theory, first advocated by Reimarus, who looked upon Jesus and the disciples as 'a band of tricksters,' but not advocated now even by the most advanced rationalists. The mythical theory, associated with Strauss's name, which largely depends on the supposition of the elapse of a long time between the death of Christ and the establishment of the tradition embodied in the Gospels. The rationalistic theory proper, associated with the name of Paulus, which sometimes explained the miracles away and sometimes accounted for them by the use of secret remedies on the part of Christ (and the disciples).

As for the now popular theory of auto-suggestion, it is applicable only in a limited number of instances, and it is the verdict of medical science that suggestion is incapable of removing any organic, as distinguished from functional, disorder. Our writer rejects also the explanation which rests upon the assumption, supported by Ernest F. Scott among recent scholars, that the disciples—upon whose testimony the miracles were recorded—lived in an age of great credulity.

The so-called 'spiritual' theory is also dealt with, and James Moffatt's suggested interpretations of the feeding of the five thousand are criticised. The miracle is neither the transference of poetic tradition (the Messiah was expected to feed the people with bread from heaven) into prose statement, nor is it a parable or comparison which has been turned into a tale.

A criticism of Hume's attack upon miracles leads to a discussion of the relation between miracle and natural law. It is pointed out that scientific and philosophical writers often allow the possibility of real miracle. Indeed it is difficult for the theist not to allow this possibility. But the question of actuality remains.

It is rightly urged towards the conclusion of the whole discussion that the question of actuality cannot be separated from the person and work of the One of whose life on earth the miracles are recorded. We are not dealing with an ordinary man when we are dealing with the man Christ Jesus. We are dealing with One who was the Son of God.

When Stanley visited Mackay of Uganda in time of cruel persecution he wrote of him, 'God knows, if ever man had reason to think of "graves and worms and oblivion," and to be lonely and doleful and sad, Mackay had, when, after murdering his bishop, and burning his pupils, and strangling his converts, and clubbing to death his dark friends, Mwanga turned his eye of death on him. And yet the little man met it with calm blue eyes that never winked. To see one man of this kind . . . and to

hear him lead his little flock to show forth God's loving kindness in the morning and His faithfulness every night is worth going a long journey for the moral courage and contentment that one derives from it.'

Such is the heartening that every discerning reader will receive from the last sermons of Martin NIEMÖLLER, now published under the title of *The Gestapo Defied* (Hodge; 6s. net). They are the words of a man who calmly looks persecution and death in the face, who stands like a rock when others fall, who stays his soul on God when all human help fails and justice is denied, and who calls upon his flock, when suffering the loss of all that men count dear, still to rejoice in God their Saviour.

There is nothing sensational or predominantly political in these sermons, as the title might suggest. In this respect the title is somewhat misleading and hardly worthy of the substance of the book. There is no angry or bitter word, nothing provocative or partisan; but here is a man who takes his stand, Lutherlike, upon the Word of God, because he can do naught else, and confronts the foe like some great cliff against which the wild waves beat in vain.

At the same time the crisis through which the Church in Germany has been called to pass is never for one moment absent from the preacher's mind, and every sermon is coloured by it. The speaking is plain and bold to a degree, and the attitude throughout is resolute. 'Friends, there is talk of peace. Do not believe it! What is meant is that Jesus of Nazareth should share His sovereignty for a time with a new Christ, that the Gospel of the Redeemer of sinners should compromise with the religious complacency of the "racially pure" man, that the old Gospel should fall into line with the new myth which refuses to have anything to do with the Lord Jesus Christ. But that is impossible, the Church will never do that, it does not lie in its power. For He is the Lord and will tolerate no other gods beside him.' Or again, take this. 'The Gospel must remain *the Gospel*; the Church must remain *the Church*; the Creed must remain *the Creed*; Evangelical Christians must remain *Evangelical* Christians. And we must not—for Heaven's sake—make a *German* Gospel out of the Gospel; we must not—for Heaven's sake—make a *German* Church out of Christ's Church; we must not—for God's sake—make *German* Christians out of Evangelical Christians.'

No words could be clearer or more courageous. Without degrading the pulpit with diatribes against Hitler and his minions the preacher makes plain to every hearer the principles that are at stake. He reads the names of members of the Christian community who are in concentration camps for Christ's sake; he deplores the falling away of some who through fear have ceased to attend Church or give a Christian witness. Most bitter of all he points to some in the congregation who have turned traitor and are now present as the spies of the Gestapo. These recurring references when taken together give a vivid picture of the conditions of Church life among the evangelical Christians of Germany.

Best of all, in these sermons we have preaching of the highest kind. They are in no sense ephemeral, addressed to the crisis of the hour and therefore doomed to pass away with it. Much modern preaching is of that sort. But here we have apostolic preaching, impressive proclamations of the everlasting gospel. Christ is alone exalted; His redeeming work is set forth; and every hearer is lovingly and urgently entreated to accept Him as Saviour and Lord. This has always been the characteristic of great preaching in times of persecution. Nor is the reason far to seek. For the Apostles themselves preached, and the New Testament itself was written, in time of persecution. So that the Church is never nearer the heart of the gospel, and never feels herself better placed for receiving and understanding the Christian message, than in times of persecution. Hence we find that when such crises arise, and men's minds are agitated with anxieties and fears, Christian preachers have used the opportunity to present Christ as the all-sufficient Saviour, and to urge their hearers to take

refuge from the storm in Him and to rise above the tumult on the wings of heavenly faith and hope.

So is it here. The Word of God is set forth as the sole and immovable foundation of the Faith against all modern gospels and words of men; Jesus Christ crucified and risen is preached as the only Saviour. Repeatedly the verse of Zinzendorf's hymn is quoted,

> Christ's precious blood and righteousness
> My jewels are, my festive dress.
> Clad in this glorious robe of grace
> Boldly I'll stand before God's face.

'Is that all we need? Yea, verily! Christ has taken away the power from death, and freed us from sin's claim to sovereignty. And Martin Luther is right when he says, "Where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation."' The call to repentance is sounded. 'Dear friends, and especially dear young friends, let us, I beseech you, not lend our ears to those seductive voices that try to turn God's call to repentance and conversion into ridicule by telling us that the proper attitude for a German of to-day is the attitude of a Prometheus or a Lucifer, the attitude of a defiant Titan against the will of God and the vicissitudes of life. That attitude is nothing—assuredly nothing—but one of Satan's lies with which he tries to safeguard human dignity.'

In view of recent reports that NIEMÖLLER has joined the Church of Rome, an event as unlikely as that Martin Luther should have bowed the knee, it may be noted that in one of his last sermons he deals with the unity of the Church. He rejoices that persecution has brought Protestant and Romanist in Germany nearer in sympathy and in a new appreciation of the fundamental things in regard to which they are at one. A consciousness is thereby awaked that 'we all belong together as one great congregation to the body of Christ, and we should like to enter the spaciousness of a real Christian brotherhood which will unite us one with the other and make us free to serve one another.' But he goes on to make clear that the one vital thing is 'that Jesus Christ—and He *alone* —is the Lord and Head of His Church, and that He directs and rules His members—who may, moreover, be manifold enough—through the Holy Spirit.' Nothing could be more wholesome than that these sermons should be widely read throughout the English-speaking world, if for no other reason than to remind us that in Germany, where such sermons are preached and congregations assemble to listen to them, there are assuredly seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

Spiritual Problems and the War.

V. Christian Missions and World Crisis.

By Godfrey E. Phillips, M.A., Professor of Missions, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham.

The future of Christian Missions is equally a spiritual problem and a matter of urgent practical concern. To begin with the latter aspect, if it is asked, 'How have missions fared during the war?' the answer at the moment of writing (January 1941) is 'Hitherto surprisingly well.' Few realize how terrific are the blows they have sustained by evacuation and air-raids in Britain and by the cutting off of nearly all the Continental missions from their home base. But the very challenge has called forth a corresponding intensity of devotion. Home supporters have determined that, come what may, this movement shall not lack support, with the result that the fall in income of most missionary societies so far is not such as to cause alarm, and some have received an increase. There has been the same spirit in many places abroad in the efforts to save the organized work of the German, Scandinavian, and other Continental missions. Typical of much is the instance of the village widow in India who came to the Danish missionary's house and said, 'I know you used to get a big salary, as much as eight annas (say a shilling) a day. I can't manage that, because I only get about four annas a day for my household, but I think I can give you two annas a day.' As regards German missions themselves, before the war when its approach threw darkening shadows, fortunately there were consultations with their leaders which enabled national and international councils on the outbreak of war to take steps which they knew the German missionary leaders would approve. Governments, too, were as sympathetic as was possible consistently with a policy of taking no risk. So there too for the first year and a third, there is a record of much being salvaged amid the great collapse. In places the 'Native' Church has progressed in independence as much as in twenty-five years of normal experience. The annual World Survey in the *International Review of Missions* is on the whole encouraging. Where the finance is to be found for these enormous 'extras,' or how the ordinary responsibilities are to be met if raids are further intensified or the war drags on long, no man knows, yet in the battered Mission Houses there is thankfulness for the past and well-founded hope for the future.

But it is no disparagement of that thankfulness and hope to say that it would be a snare if it masked for many of us the need for long-range thinking about the future. 'Have faith in God, appeal to the enthusiasm of the churches, and soon the storm will be past and we can resume our pre-war programmes'—that attitude is not likely to be more right in this realm than in our planning for post-war society. We are being warned lest we be content to patch up the old London, Coventry, or Birmingham without the vision of nobler cities made possible by the very greatness of present disaster. The warning is relevant to the mission administrator who has until now contrived to overcome new difficulties presented to him day after day, so that nothing very drastic had to be done. Is this war a temporary episode which will leave the churches operating as they did before, or is it a major upheaval in human life marking the end of an era, and demanding radical reconstruction on a foundation of first principles? Unless the statesmen are unanimously leading us astray, it is the latter more than the former. That does not involve a hasty jettisoning of good things we have, any more than in business or politics or the efforts for a 'planned economy.' But it does demand willingness to be made over again, to ask fundamental questions of Why and How, and something more than willingness to catch sight of that 'pattern in the mount' according to which the building on the plain must be erected.

We have lately been reminded, notably in Professor John Foster's articles in this journal, how amidst the crash of early Roman civilization Augustine went back to first principles regarding the City of God, and found guidance from the Holy Spirit which profoundly influenced for good the whole later history of the Church. Is it an exaggeration to say that we need his work done over again for our own day? Perhaps while most of us are peering shortsightedly into the next few years, the new Augustine has somewhere been commissioned by God. Perhaps the Spirit is sending into many different souls rays of new light which when gathered up in the Church will illuminate the path into the future. Certainly we

need to be led by more than ordinary human wisdom.

Lest that sound to any one vague and airy, come to earth again on the question of finance, the reality of which no one doubts, though it is no more real than other things which some do doubt but which are even more important. Budgets must be made, and with an eye to ten years and fifty years hence as well as to next year. How can the missionary financier forecast anything, when all depends on the war? Is he to assume that the supporting constituency will be as strong economically after the war as now? That would really mean that he banks on a *short*, victorious war, for which no publicist gives him a crumb of encouragement. Or is he, while hoping for the best, to contemplate the worst possibility, and plan missions for a church back in the catacombs? Or—and here probably is the voice of the ordinary man, such as the writer—is he to set his teeth and resolutely face the possibility of victory at last attained by a struggle so impoverishing that the middle classes, for the last fifty years the main financial factor in missions, disappear from the scene as a money force? We hate to think of it, but sometimes must do what we hate. Big business, with its ear close to the ground, even before the war seemed to be arranging its mass-production methods with the weekly wage earners in view as the decisive people, and every month of war makes them *more*, not less, decisive. If those masses were crowding the churches, missionary finance could be as well adjusted to social change as that of business, and would be healthier when based on the small giving of vast numbers. But most of them are outside and can be written off as a constituency for missions, unless—and here is a reflection to thrill the soul—unless some religious quickening brings the main population of England back to God. Such a thing happened in a similar war situation at the end of the nineteenth century; the aftermath of the Methodist revival of religion and the new support for missions were connected. Here we are very near the heart of the spiritual problems of missions. God could make as good a thing happen now if we His Church fulfilled the human conditions. All the same, the plain man arranging the finance of missions during the war is not permitted to act as if such a quickening were certain to occur. And apart from it, mere honesty faces the probability of serious reduction in the human resources available. We are set to discover how to serve the world-wide Church better with probably less money and fewer missionaries.

At the outset, it helps that there has been the stocktaking of the whole enterprise associated with the World Conference at Tambaram nine months before the war. The big subjects have all been lately examined. We will comment upon two which embrace everything of importance—the message, and the œcumenical Church, including under the latter a reference to nationalism. Thank God, we have no doubts left as to whether we have something to say which the whole world needs, which is *the* word of God to man, without which man perishes. Thirty years ago all sorts of discussions were making people doubtful. Think of the fluttering caused by the extreme statements of the 'Eschatological School' after the publication of Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Now we may wonder why we thought them so important. Even in recent years there was the left-wing theology of the American Laymen in *Re-thinking Missions* urging inter-religious co-operation for human welfare rather than conversion to Christ and His visible Church. And there was Form Criticism which when superficially understood seemed to put the real Jesus further away from us. But now whether we read Dr. Kraemer or the gifted men of many races who discuss his work in *The Authority of the Faith*, we are conscious of a new certainty. Revelation is real. The acts of God in human history, leading up to and forward from Jesus the incarnate Son of God, have given the light without which we men grope in darkness, but with which every race can find true life. The message telling of what God has thus done is relevant as is no other message to *every* human situation in every land and condition. Our plain task is to proclaim it everywhere, to blow a less uncertain trumpet, to speak our good tidings in uncompromising positive terms which every man, be he in the East or the West, can understand.

But the very certainty about our message stirs questionings about ourselves as messengers. Some words can only convince when spoken with the power of a life hid with Christ in God. Any one can say 'Thus saith the Lord,' but the hearer believes it from the lips of the prophet who clearly has come from the presence of Jehovah with whom he has been interceding for his fellows. Intellectual conviction concerning our message needs reinforcement at deeper levels from fresh contact with God and His heart for all his creatures. If they saw God and were re-commissioned as His messengers, a few could make more impression on India and China than the larger number of us made by our elaborate activities in more prosperous times. There

have been challenging voices lately in India saying, 'God gave Jesus Christ; it is the Christian's business to reproduce Him. Do that, and you will not have to seek out the Hindu, he will come in thousands seeking you.'[1] There is something not quite fair here. We have no hope of 'reproducing' in the sense of being Christs ourselves; our only hope is to be the earthen vessels containing the treasure, the candlesticks on which the light is set. But the challenge is near enough to the truth to keep us humble. If only the earthen vessel, only the candlestick, have been visible, in plain words, if only human kindliness and efficient beneficence have been prominent in our missions, instead of that unearthly life which has been the real converting power in every age, here is something which if set right would more than counter-balance any loss in our material resources. It *may* be that in strengthening the contemplative more than the active aspects of missionary life, in the discovery by the soul of new joy and strength in God rather than in well-adjusted policies and organizations, is the secret source of that reinforcement which we shall need.

So much for the message. As to the Church, the guiding of Providence is manifest in the ever-clearer focusing of the Christian mission on the building up of the world Church. At Edinburgh in 1910 we jointly realized, with the thrill of new discovery, that a Church throughout the world had come into being. At Jerusalem in 1928 a considerable delegation from the younger churches played a worthy part, and it was seen that the whole activity of the mission was being radically readjusted. By 1938 the one supreme topic which had to be discussed was the Church in the world, and the place for the discussion had to be in the midst of the younger churches, whose representatives played at least as prominent a part as those of the older. To-day when the earth is darkened by efforts either to destroy the Church or to change it into a tool of the State; when human unity is so fiercely attacked that mankind itself sometimes seems to be heading for destruction; the programme endorsed at Tambaram of centring the whole Christian mission on the building up of a church truly catholic and truly indigenous shows the only way of hope for the world. The humanitarian or cultural operations which have accompanied missionary work are secondary, and justified only in so far as they serve this aim. Science and culture, which last century supposed would bring the whole race together, have been turned into weapons of war. But in the holy Church throughout all the world, which is coming into being through God's blessing upon missions everywhere, we are given the true organ of the spiritual oneness of humanity; the Church was raised up for such a day as this, and its œcumenical character discovered just in time.

But equally we see divine guidance in the strong and recurrent demand at Tambaram for indigenous quality in the Church's life and worship. The answer to false and exaggerated nationalism is true and reasonable nationalism. If men everywhere are to find themselves one in the œcumenical Church, in each country they must be able to find in it their home, where language and forms and customs are their own, not alien. Governments, jealously guarding their various nationalisms, must see in the Christian religion something which has taken root and become naturalized among their own people, something which lies under no suspicion of being an agency for foreign 'peaceful penetration.' That can only be if while the Church becomes more indigenous, the mission as its handmaid becomes less conspicuous as a large foreign-controlled agency, dangerous (from the administrator's standpoint) to the 'national spirit.' Any one who has read the Egyptian or Turkish Press when excitement has been stirred over a case of conversion will know how important this is. The moral for missions is plain. For years past it has been clear that a smaller quantity of work, especially in the field of education, would achieve the missionary purpose better, provided it was of the highest Christian quality and technical efficiency. But in the face of the over-stimulated nationalisms of to-day action becomes urgently necessary. The mission henceforth must do less but do it better, and do it as standing behind and ministering to the indigenous Church, which will be in the foreground and in control.

Finally, the whole situation demands—which means that God commands—a fresh, faithful, and determined attack on the hitherto unsolved problem of Christian unity. At Tambaram the representatives of the younger churches, 'torn,' to quote their own words, 'between loyalty to our mother churches and loyalty to our idea of union,' got together and unanimously issued an appeal 'with all the fervour we possess' to all concerned with missions to labour with them to achieve 'the union for which our Lord prayed, through which the world would indeed believe in the Divine Mission of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.' Some of those representatives later came to Britain, and stirred great meetings by

[1] See *Re-thinking Christianity in India*, by a group of Indian authors.

simple but moving words on this subject. Is not the war a powerful amplifier of their appeal? The home Church in general has not yet heard it; and when it does hear it, difficulties will be greater than the younger churches can understand. But if God calls, will He not guide, even by ways which we cannot yet see? If the missionary societies lost half their present income, but became the agencies, or preferably the single combined agency, of a Church whose unity was visible to all men, their witness to the divine Reconciler would be heeded by the world as it is not heeded to-day.

Literature.

HONEST RELIGION.

The book by which John Oman is best known to a wide circle of readers is undoubtedly his early work 'Grace and Personality.' Very likely that will be his most enduring book. Those who are familiar with his massive thought in that early volume will turn with eagerness to this new volume, *Honest Religion* (Cambridge University Press; 7s. 6d. net). They will be glad that, as the manuscript of it was ready for the publisher on the day of Oman's death, it could be exempted from his strict ban upon posthumous publication of his papers. In this book also such readers will find themselves on familiar ground. We might almost say that *Honest Religion* is a simplified version of 'Grace and Personality,' though, when the word 'simple' is used in this connexion, we have to remember that none of Oman's works is in the realm of light literature.

The ground is familiar because the theme, as in 'Grace and Personality,' is the Rule of God. What is the nature of that Rule, its mode of working, and its consequences for man in the midst of this evanescent order? In answering this, Oman expounds what we may call a theology of freedom and responsibility. As the final order is the purpose of Love, it acts by way of respect for human personality, it is bestowed as knowledge and succour as we deal honestly with the evanescent, we find it by our own insight the eternal good and our peace as we keep humbly open to the clear, the mysterious, the sacred in the whole range of our growing experience.

That is the high theme here renewed, and though the ground is not new, there is in every chapter a ripe freshness of exposition. As distinct from his earlier books, in *Honest Religion* Oman has given us a very personal volume. It has concern for the difficulties of the inquiring mind. The 'questions' of the student stir the author's sympathy, and in response to them matter and style become often happily conversational. Best of all, Oman himself becomes very visible in these pages—in the balance of his mind, in his reverent spirit of inquiry, in his caustic humour, in his respect for unscholastic wisdom, in his theological aversions, and in the large tenderness of his nature. We may add that the 'personalism' of the book is enhanced by the gracious tributes from three of Oman's intimate friends with which it is prefaced.

Much of John Oman's theology might with justice be defined as a robust and matured Ritschlianism. But actually he eludes all such attempts at classification. Of slogans and finalities in school, or creed or church, he had a lively suspicion. His Calvinism will leave mystery in God where John Calvin left none. And if we are to have church loyalties 'honesty compels us to realize that the same Providence which suffers us may well suffer many queer creatures besides.' Sometimes he handles 'authority' as if it were an incendiary substance, and as if the task of a true theology were to provide the buckets of sand for thwarting its fiery possibilities! There is ground for the feeling that Oman's theology lacked positiveness with regard to the *doctrinal contents* of faith, and that in his emphasis upon '*our own insight*' as a court of appeal he minimized the problem how that insight itself is created and sustained. Nevertheless his search for a theology of freedom which would be at the same time and all the time a recording of the deep things of God was a noble endeavour. All his students must have felt that in the company of his mind they were in a region of greatness. And this measure of him will be revived for many in this, his last book.

John Macleod.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DAVID HUME.

There has been little doubt of the genius of David Hume, but much doubt of his sincerity.

His 'Dialogues concerning Natural Religion' has always presented a personal problem in interpretation. If, however, the tendency of certain recent interpretations is to be trusted, we may regard Hume as sincerely adhering to what is called in that work a 'genuine theism.' We may even hear him speaking through Cleanthes (rationalistic theist as he is) when it is maintained that at every turn we are obliged to have recourse to the hypothesis of design in the universe; or through Philo (who is naturalistic and sceptical in outlook) when it is admitted that all objections to the hypothesis of design appear mere 'cavils and sophisms' to those who realize the beauty and fitness of final causes.

Whatever Hume's personal attitude may have been towards 'natural religion,' there is a growing opinion that his standpoint and motives have been seriously misrepresented in the past. In line with this opinion is a vindication of Hume's character which has come recently from the pen of Norman Kemp Smith, of the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. A distinguished representative of the neo-realistic movement in theory of knowledge, and already world-famous for his masterly commentary on, and translation of, Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason,' Dr. Kemp Smith has followed up an edition of Hume's 'Dialogues' with an exposition of Hume's general philosophical positions: *The Philosophy of David Hume* (Macmillan; 25s. net).

In this work Dr. Kemp Smith demurs strongly to the charges of moral weakness preferred against Hume even in the house of his friends. John Stuart Mill said that 'regard for truth formed no part of his character,' and T. H. Huxley said that he had 'no small share of the craving after mere notoriety and vulgar success.' But the emphasis in the first charge was on what Mill considered to be Hume's unduly sceptical attitude of mind. As for Huxley's charge, which was largely a reflection on Hume for turning to political and historical studies, there is good reason for holding that Hume wrote the 'Treatise on Human Nature' (to which, after all, he devoted no less than ten years) as the foundation of his work in ethics, politics, and history.

But the moral rehabilitation of David Hume is only a side-issue in Dr. Kemp Smith's volume. His main purpose is to provide a critical study of the origins and central doctrines of Hume's philosophy. He explains, however, that he has not considered Hume's writings on political theory and economics, and refers us to his edition of the 'Dialogues' for his views on Hume's religion.

After treating of the origins of Hume's philosophy Dr. Kemp Smith offers a simplified statement of the central doctrines, taken mainly in the order of their exposition in the 'Treatise' and the two 'Enquiries.' Then follows the main portion of the work, which consists of a detailed consideration of the central doctrines, taken in what may be presumed to have been the order of their first discovery. In the concluding part is considered, among other things, the relation of the 'Treatise' to the 'Enquiries.'

If one were to give a compendious description of this important book, it might be described as a companion to the study of the 'Treatise.' In our view an indispensable companion. For with penetrative insight, supported by a great background of historical learning, Dr. Kemp Smith appears to have discovered the main clue to the puzzling inconsistencies and confusions to be found in the 'Treatise.' It is his conviction that it was through 'the gateway of morals' that Hume entered into his philosophy, and that, as a consequence of this, Books II. and III. are earlier in date of first composition than Book I. This is a critical view that throws light upon many obscure places; and the outworking of it serves to unfold Hume's 'new Scene of Thought' as it was opened up to his ardent mind.

According to Dr. Kemp Smith, the great quickening influence upon Hume which inspired his philosophic quest came through Francis Hutcheson. Though Hume could not accept Hutcheson's teaching in many points, he welcomed his inversion of the rôles of reason and feeling in moral judgment, and saw how he might apply the new point of view in the treatment of all judgments of matters of fact and existence. Dr. Kemp Smith is persuaded that Hume's central thesis is contained in this sentence from the First Book of the 'Treatise': 'belief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures.' And thus it is that Hume's philosophy, if positive and naturalistic, is not fundamentally sceptical.

Perhaps, then, the conclusion of the 'Dialogues,' that, as Philo says, 'the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence,' may not have represented in Hume's mind the whole of 'genuine theism.'

W. FULTON.

THE FALL OF THE IDOLS.

Among the many books and pamphlets which have appeared *à propos* of our present distress Dean

Inge's *The Fall of the Idols* (Putnam ; 8s. 6d. net) deserves special attention. In a rather pathetic Preface he speaks of himself as an old man who has lived to see many a dream in the dust, and has no hope that many of the characteristic features of the England he loved will survive. He proceeds in the six chapters of the book to show how Progress, Democracy, Economics, Pacificism, Humanism and Religion, have all been shaken. Things that were once accepted as almost axioms have proved fallacious. The twentieth century stands in sharp contrast to its predecessor and the world into which he and many more of us were born has crumbled beneath us. The idols have fallen. In the first chapter, on Progress, he brings together from many sources facts on various aspects of our civilization which must be carefully weighed ere one answers the question as to progress and the very survival of civilization. An interesting and impressive comparison between our problems and those of the ancient Roman Empire is made. His conclusion is that every institution strangles the ideas which gave it birth. Yet there is escape from despair in setting our affections on the absolute unchanging values in which God's nature and will are revealed to us.

In a discussion of Democracy, while justice is done to its merits, the Dean clearly believes it is not of great merit on the whole and will in his opinion improbably survive. He frankly admits he cannot tell what will take its place, only he hopes it will not be Fascism.

Space does not allow one to summarize even the conclusions of all the chapters. Each is learned, each is suggestive, and in each there is something provocative, as one expects from the Dean.

From the closing chapter on Religion one may select just one point to illustrate the 'meaty' character of the whole discussion. On one point, the Dean holds, we must return to traditional theology. 'A Christianity which rejects the belief in evil spirits is not the religion of Christ, or of the Apostles, or of the Catholic Church.' Liberal theology made a perilous mistake in trying to eliminate the devil. This error resulted partly from 'the perfectibility heresy of the nineteenth century,' partly from a quite inadequate view of sin, and partly from a facile monistic philosophy. The chapter closes with a criticism of the historic creeds as inadequate for to-day, and with a Creed in the very words of Scripture drawn up by an unnamed writer. Some may think that this is a weak rather than a strong ending ; it is the kind of thing which has been tried so often and so ineffectively.

W. D. Niven.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE.

An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth (Allen & Unwin ; 12s. 6d. net) is based on the author, Mr. Bertrand Russell's 1940 William James Lectures at Harvard University. It is explained in the Preface that the book has developed gradually over a period of years ; and certainly the book bears evidence of this. While its chapters are complete in themselves, their order does not follow a logically progressive scheme. The result is that Mr. Russell has not infrequently to refer the reader to other parts of the work for the continuance of his discussions. But this mark of hasty compilation apart, we have here once again the product of a brilliant, vigorous, and flexible mind.

The book is a study in that field of theory of knowledge to which Mr. Russell turned many years ago, after he had finished—or almost finished—the great contributions to mathematical logic on which he built his fame. His method of investigation differs, as he points out, from traditional method in theory of knowledge in the importance attached to linguistic considerations. He considers language in relation to two main problems : the meaning of the phrase, 'empirical evidence for the truth of a proposition' ; the inference to be drawn from the fact that there sometimes is such evidence.

As for his general standpoint, he expresses himself as more in sympathy with the logical positivists (with whom indeed one has long associated his name) than with any other school. But faithful to early influence, he attaches more importance than they do to Berkeley and Hume ; and he asks us to regard his book as an attempt to combine a general outlook akin to Hume's with the methods that have grown out of modern logic. It appears to be in accordance with such an attempt that he should describe the net result of his inquiry as the substitution of 'articulate hesitation' for 'inarticulate certainty.'

And now a bare summary of contents. First an introductory discussion of words, sentences, and the relation of an experience to a sentence which (partially) describes it. Then the treatment of certain problems in the analysis of language. (Here appears the suggestive postulate of a hierarchy of languages.) Then the questions of perceptive knowledge and 'propositional attitudes.' Thus is the way prepared for the culminating discussions on such themes as truth and falsehood, truth and experience, truth and verification, significance and verification, warranted assertibility.

As a good realist, Mr. Russell subscribes to the

'correspondence' theory of truth. But he rejects as narrow the 'epistemological' form of the theory, according to which truth is confined to propositions that correspond to 'experience' (to what we perceive or remember). He favours the 'logical' form, according to which truth is confined to propositions that correspond to 'fact,' and which involves the possibility of propositions that are true although there can never be any evidence in their favour. In this he parts company with the rigorous among the logical positivists and disclaims a complete metaphysical scepticism.

It is probably too much to hope, but many would fain see Mr. Russell throwing off the shackles of his positivism and rising to a philosophical appreciation not merely of language but also of the higher values of life and even of the real structure of the world.

W. Fulton.

THE MIND OF CHRIST.

When I glanced at the contents of *The Mind of Jesus Christ*, by Mr. G. B. Robson (Epworth Press; 5s. net), I confess it was with a feeling of weariness that I addressed myself to the task of reading it. 'Jesus Himself,' 'The Gospels,' 'The Mind of Jesus about God,' 'The Kingdom of God,' 'The Mind of Jesus about Himself,' and so on—was I to go over all this again? It has been done so often! But actual contact with this fresh and original writer soon dispelled this feeling. Mr. Robson has the only originality that matters. He actually looks at familiar facts as if he had himself discovered them. He has probably read widely, but he seldom quotes. His book contains his own perceptions, and he has succeeded in investing the most familiar conceptions and realities of the Gospels with an appearance of novelty that is not eccentric or forced or artificial.

I found this fresh vision especially attractive in the chapter on the Mind of Jesus about His death. He does not discuss theories of the Atonement. He does not lean on any one else. We move about with Jesus and are lifted up into His thought of triumphant Life.

'The death of Jesus on the Cross was not only the fulfilment of His own principle, "He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it," but it was His final overcoming of the world of evil, His demonstration that it can be overcome. He was crucified but not conquered. His body was broken and His blood spilled, but that which He essentially *was* suffered no defeat in death, but won victory and exaltation . . . nothing that He was and is can be finally defeated, for it is a revelation of the real nature of things. His achievement is the final expression, as Jesus believed, of the mind of God. God is like that, forgiving but implacable love, working to a great end in which we are all included; and the attempt to defeat God is self-destructive.' That is a good example of the historical vision of this writer. It will not satisfy the systematic theologian. Perhaps it will not satisfy any of us. Perhaps it does not satisfy Mr. Robson. Are we ever satisfied on this subject? At any rate, this writer does carry us far into the mind of the Master, and at every point, on every topic, he has something to say that opens up new avenues of thought. Any one who helps us to understand Jesus better, who makes Jesus live for us, who sees with his own eyes things that had become dim for us by over-familiarity, deserves our warm thanks. And this can really be claimed for the book before us.

F. J. Rae.

WARRACK LECTURES.

The theme of the Rev. Dr. Oswald B. Milligan's Warrack Lectures—*The Ministry of Worship* (Milford; 5s. net)—is the objective value of our Church services. He stresses the fact that not only do we offer our oblations, but that there is a divine action to which it is the duty of the worshipper constantly to respond. Something happens. Worship is the outcome of the gift of salvation mediated to man in history—Christ's eyes looking with compassion, His hands laid on the sufferer, His voice speaking to the heavy-laden. It is because God comes out to meet us that we arise and go unto God. Thus does the author seek to allow this thread of true devotion to enter into the varied texture of Worship—Adoration, Confession, Supplication, Thanksgiving, Intercession, etc. Suggestions are given in these Lectures as to the fitting use of Praise, the use of the Creed, the place of the Offertory, the Recital of the Absolution, the Reading of Scripture, and, above all, the preparation of the minister for his task.

On the somewhat vexed question as to the employment of a liturgy, Dr. Milligan balances the views of the opposing schools with judicious insight, but it is not difficult for the student of these writings to discover where his own particular selection centres. He lays careful emphasis on the fact that more important than the question of written, or unread prayers, is the preparation of the celebrant himself. His *method* is not the main feature, so

long as he comes to the altar with heart and mind furnished and hallowed to lead his people nearer to God.

Dr. Milligan elaborates the technique of Sacramental Services, giving excellent advice to those training for the ministry.

None of us who have recently read these pages, and heard the Lectures delivered to our Divinity men, can but feel that a distinct contribution has been made to devotional literature. The beautiful and ancient Church where he served was a fitting shrine in which to elevate the high office which Dr. Milligan adorned. We are reminded as we visit that sanctuary, and as we reflect on the themes so dear to him, of a passage in Boswell. He tells us how he took his loved friend Samuel Johnson from Auchinleck House along the three-mile path which had been prepared by his own father to the Kirk where he worshipped, and how in Lord Auchinleck's phrase it had become for him the *via sacra*. Inscribed on stone over the portal of the temple where our author ministered is the word which gives inspiration to these searching admonitions in his book—'The Lord loveth the gates of Zion.' As our theologicals begin the work of their parishes the thoughts of many of them should turn to instructions such as this book reveals. They may not always follow the precise directions. Yet the spirit of true priesthood should be for them, and all of us in the ministry, a more real and consecrated impulse. An unhappy formalism mars our approach to God.

P. Laurence K. Mudie.

The Rev. F. W. B. Bullock, C.F., Ph.D., has set about the compilation of the story of the Theological College of which he has been an Associate, a resident Member, the Chaplain, and the Vice-Principal. The first volume carries the story to the end of A.D. 1907. The second volume, which Dr. Bullock hopes some day to prepare, will bring the story up to the date of publication. The work is entitled *The History of Ridley Hall, Cambridge* (Cambridge University Press; 18s. net). Copies are obtainable only from the Principal of the College.

It is a work which will be of great interest to students of the Evangelical movement in the Church of England, and more especially to old Ridleians, whose names appear all to be recorded with meticulous care and may readily be found in the Index of fifteen pages.

The story of the Hall is prefaced by an informative account of the Theological Colleges of the Church of England before A.D. 1875, the date of the inception of the project of Ridley Hall; as also an account of the provision for theological study, and for preparation for Holy Orders in Cambridge, and of the work of Evangelical leaders there before A.D. 1875.

This first volume traces the fortunes of the Hall under its first two Principals, Handley Moule and Thomas Wortley Drury. The third Principal was A. J. Tait, who was succeeded by the fourth and present Principal, J. P. S. R. Gibson. The present Visitor of Ridley Hall is Dr. A. W. T. Perowne, Bishop of Worcester, who recalls in the Foreword that though Westcott and Lightfoot acknowledged the need for post-graduate training of men before taking Holy Orders, they would take no active part in its promotion in an Institution so definitely associated with one party in the Church of England. Dr. Perowne rightly praises Dr. Bullock for the care he has taken to make his work a monument of accuracy.

The most recent of the Church of Scotland's 'Youth Text-books' is entitled, *What We Believe* (Church of Scotland's Committee on the Religious Instruction of Youth; 6d.). Some years ago the General Assembly of the Church authorized the issue of 'A Short Statement of the Church's Faith' which had been prepared by a Commission of its members. Later it was decided to prepare a text-book in amplification of this and a handbook for the study of Bible Classes and Discussion Groups. The result is before us in the form of the book mentioned above. It is an excellent piece of work, consisting of twenty-seven chapters in which the paragraphs of the 'Short Statement' are quoted, and clear explanations of each follow. There is urgent need for some such intelligent guide about the nature and content of Christian belief, and the one here supplied might with advantage be used beyond the limits of the Scottish Church.

A competent and sincere book on the relation of business to Christian teaching has been written by Sir Harold Bellman, LL.D., J.P., *Christianity and Commerce* (Epworth Press; 4d. net). The real question, whether financial advantage or human purposes shall dominate industry and the business man's loyalties, is faced here and frankly discussed. There is a wide range of vision in this booklet which is well worth reading if only for the ability and humanity with which the whole topic is handled. Sir Harold is more than a business man. He is a cultured and serious thinker.

In a small volume—*The Gate of Courage* (Hodder & Stoughton ; 1s. 6d. and 2s. net)—Mr. W. J. Gant has gathered together quotations from Professor Moffatt's translation of the Bible. He is a member of the staff of a London publishing house. He centralizes on the theme of daring in the Scriptures, and his references are largely culled from passages that suggest fidelity and hope, in Psalm, Epistle, and Gospel. This is not the place to enlarge on the merits of the translation itself. We often miss the majesty and rhythm of the Elizabethan translation. Yet Dr. Moffatt himself finds a sufficient compensation for this in his ability to startle the reader by the refreshing reality of words that may have lost for us something of their inwardness. It will be sufficient reward to Mr. Gant in his catena if he prompts in us that grace so sorely needed for our times.

The publication of the Right Rev. C. F. Garbett's Lent Book, *We Would See Jesus* (Longmans ; 2s. 6d. net), may be hailed with interest. It is original in its setting, colourful in its treatment, and spiritual in its purpose. The writer has sketched for us certain outstanding features in the ministry of Jesus. He has added to his interpretation of these by giving us contacts of the spirit of the New Testament in crucial phases of the perplexing life of this era. In Church history he often finds it hard to discover even in dim outline the love of Christ. Sometimes it has been their very loyalty to Christ which has made men refuse to recognize the Church as the body through which He works. Yet Jesus claims the whole life, and it is the Bishop's plea to make that moral demand of Jesus effective in the world, with all its collision of forces, and grave enigmas. The preaching of Christ as Saviour, Dr. Garbett holds, has not been as strong and uncompromising as once it was. Man has become so confident of himself and his mastery over Nature that he is inclined to think that a Saviour is superfluous. The book has a strong and pungent analysis of the Resurrection and its real and concrete meaning for the century in which our work is done. And the careful reader of these suggestive pages cannot but rise from their perusal without a firmer and more enlightened understanding of the relation of the New Testament to our own problems and life. Many a teacher of youth will find in this volume much to arrest and quicken his classes ; and the preacher may discover ideas of cogency and inspiration.

Mr. H. V. Morton is sure of a large audience for anything he writes, and by his vividly written books on Jesus and Paul and Bible lands he has done fine service to the Christian cause and made Bible scenes and characters more real to many. His most recent book, *Women of the Bible* (Methuen ; 5s. net), is of slighter build. It contains twenty-three short sketches of Bible women, seventeen of which are from the Old Testament. Some of the characters depicted, such as Rahab and Potiphar's wife, are but shadowy figures. A notable omission is the name of Miriam. Needless to say, Mr. Morton writes with fine imagination and deft touches of local colour. The treatment throughout is sympathetic, and in days when the Bible is so little read these sketches may serve to awaken new interest in some of the finest of Bible stories.

Can religion be taught to young people by a catechism ? The answer, with one qualification, is decidedly in the negative. The reasons are obvious. Statements in a catechism are abstract. They sum up a process of religious thinking. They embody in intellectual forms the theology of an epoch. And they are hopelessly beyond the understanding of most children. But there is one qualification. A catechism may possibly be of value at the Secondary School stage, that is, at the close of a child's education, when he has been religiously trained by more concrete methods. It is therefore reassuring that in the Preface to *The Teaching of the Church Catechism* (S.P.C.K. ; 3s. net) Canon A. R. Browne-Wilkinson says that the book 'is intended to serve the needs of members of the higher forms of secondary schools, students in training colleges and in parochial classes, and their teachers.' Regarded in this way, the book is an excellent exposition of the Catechism. It is divided into three parts. Part one contains an exposition of the teaching of the Catechism, article by article. Part two is the Catechism itself with explanatory notes. Part three gives a 'Supplementary Instruction,' with additional notes, which is really a suggested new catechism. This third part has been drawn up by a committee and is issued under the auspices of the Archbishop of York. It is apparently designed for use with *all* ages of children. So far as a catechism can be properly employed at all, this careful and intelligent book will supply all a teacher wants. But we are left with a note of interrogation in our minds, all the same.

Christian Doctrine and the Child.

By the Bishop of Liverpool.

The saying that religion is 'caught not taught' is one of those half-truths that help to keep the balance of the whole. Taken by itself it is seriously misleading. For it might suggest that the one thing needful is to give the child the infection of our own faith, and that, if we can only do that, then it matters little what we teach or how we teach it. Such a theory would pay too much honour to ourselves and our example, and too little to the child. For the child has a right to a mental grasp of Christian elements, and we have the duty of helping him to acquire it. To our forefathers this seemed a comparatively easy task. They supposed that all they had to do was to reduce these elements to a simple form, that is, to a form which sounded simple to adult ears. It must needs contain here and there some unfamiliar words. These must be explained, again in simple language. The result thus 'made easy' was given to the child to learn by heart.

The other day I listened to a school display in which the boys were catechizing each other. One would rehearse a question and choose another to give the answer. Mechanically the performance was perfect, and it was warmly applauded by the spectators. But I wondered whether it had any relation to the learners' lives, and also whether they liked it. I even wondered whether the effort to remember what must have seemed to them irrelevant might not give them a lasting distaste for the whole subject.

In the last fifty years the science and art of teaching has been revolutionized, especially in that branch of it which deals with 'elements.' In the old days it was supposed by headmasters that while real scholars must be found to teach the highest forms, anybody who could 'keep discipline' would do for the lowest. But now it is realized that to teach the elements of any subject is harder than to handle its more advanced stages. It calls for more training and deeper study, not so much of the subjects of instruction as of the mind and spirit of the child. One of the truths revealed by this study is that the child's knowledge must begin on the level of his own experience, and must grow out of it, first into the experience of others, and only then into whatever formula has been devised to crystallize what a wider human experience has proved to be true. Here are two examples which I owe to a book by Miss Phyllis Dent called *Teaching Doctrine* (National Society; 1s.).

The teacher looks ahead to the time when the child will profess his belief that in Baptism he was made a 'member of Christ.' How shall he be led up to this idea? Not by telling him that it is so, and that it is his duty to believe it. Nor by explaining what is meant by 'membership.' We must go further back, and seek an appropriate point of connexion between the child's individual experience and the general truth we want to disclose to him. We might remind him of an occasion when he woke up at night and found himself in the grip of some terror. He cried out. Some one came to him, probably his mother. She told him that it was only a dream, and there was nothing to be afraid of. That did not help him much. We cannot argue anybody out of fear. What did help was just her presence in the room. Being near, she lent him courage and peace. So he turned over and went to sleep again. Next, he might be told the story of Paul's visit to Jerusalem soon after his conversion. Christians there must have dreaded the arrival of 'Saul the persecutor.' But they found him entirely different from what they had expected. What had changed him? It was that he had found a Friend who was always near, sharing his thoughts and lending His own strength and comfort. So might the child build up a meaning of his own for the doctrine of 'membership in Christ.'

The other example, rather more advanced, illustrates an approach to doctrinal teaching very useful to the teacher. Let him study the history of the human experience lying at the back of the doctrine to be taught. Let him ask himself, 'How did men and women come to believe this? How can I admit the children into a similar process?' Miss Dent assumes that teacher and pupils (not too many at a time) are working together, he directing paths of thought, they contributing suggestions in a common search for truth. He has in mind the doctrine of the Trinity. He needs stories, showing how people came to express their belief in Three Persons who are still one God. He selects the experience of Peter, making legitimate use of imagination to fill out what the Gospels tell us about him into a vital whole. It falls into three stages. First, what would Peter learn, as a boy, about God? What stories would he

be told? They would mostly be about God *above*, showing that He made us and all things, and that we belong to Him as part of His creation. Then when Peter grew up he met Jesus, and loved Him. What was it that made Peter and his friends love Jesus? One day Peter made up his mind that his Friend was the Son of God. That frightened him. He knew that he was too bad to be Jesus' friend. 'Depart from me——' But soon he was to learn that God had come into the world, to be *among* us, for the very reason that, left to ourselves, we are indeed too bad. How did he and the others discover that? What new thing about God did it reveal to them? Finally, Jesus promised that soon after He had departed from them, He and the Father would send another Friend to live and work not only *among* but *within* them. When did He come? What difference did it make to Peter and the others, to the Church? By some such help a child may be set in the way of preparing a personal content for such words as 'made,' 'redeemed,' 'sanctifieth,' in the stated doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Such instances as these might easily be multiplied. They illustrate the methods now practised by our best-trained teachers. Do they not point to an elementary stage of religious instruction into which formulated doctrine should not, and actually does not, enter? The formula is there, but in the teacher, not in the lesson in which he conveys its foundations to the child. If this is so, then the issue between 'Simple Bible Teaching' and 'Definite (*i.e.* doctrinal) Instruction' is no longer a live issue at the stage at which it arose fifty years ago. And with it we may hope that the suspicions and fears that gathered round it then have also largely disappeared. It is when we formulate and define that the differences between us become divisive. At that point let them be explained to our young people in the senior classes of Sunday Schools, in Guilds, Bible Classes and Study Circles, at least in so far as to make them sincere and intelligent members of the religious body into which they have been born. So may each Church build its own superstructure upon the foundations laid in the preparatory stage, and the truest foundations are the same for all.

A Neglected Clue in Hebrews xi. 1.

By the Very Reverend R. O. P. Taylor, M.A., Ringwood, Hants.

'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen' (A.V.), Ἔστιν δὲ πίστις ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων.

In studying this dictum, great attention has been given to the word ὑπόστασις, but little or none has been paid to πράγματα. Yet, in such an aphorism, every word counts. Unfortunately for us, we are accustomed to having πράγματα translated by 'things.' This is the vaguest word in our language. But what stands in the text is a word with a definite meaning and weight of its own. Perhaps this may stand out clearer if we look at it in less familiar surroundings, in an aphorism addressed to another Jewish audience, in the same period. This is 4 Mac 1^{16}, Σοφία δὴ τοίνυν ἐστὶν γνῶσις θείων καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων, καὶ τῶν τούτων αἰτίων. 'Wisdom (Sophia) is a knowledge of divine and human πραγμάτων and of their causes.' In this sentence, also, every word tells. But the primary word is Sophia, the practical handling of affairs, and πραγ. carries its ordinary meaning, which is 'Affairs.' In point of fact, the word is common, especially in the Papyri, and always in the sense of 'Affairs' of one kind or another. It is never the equivalent of a mere neuter plural, as our word 'Things' is. This makes all the difference. 'Things' suggests a world of inanimate objects. But πράγματα belongs to a personal world. For as Milligan states in the *Vocabulary*, the very πράσσω, 'like the Latin *ago*, suggests the action of a moral and responsible being.' If we recollect how, in the κοινή, writers slip from one part of speech to another, retaining the same specific idea, the most casual reflection on the group, πράσσω, πρᾶξις, πραγματεύομαι, and πραγματεία will show how definite is the idea of personal activity.

In order to justify the treatment of πρᾶγμα as a significant word, three cases may be instanced in

which a word of this group is used. They are all important passages in which the writer was choosing his words carefully. St. Luke, in speaking of the Gospel, in which he recounted the earthly activities of our Lord, describes his book as a διήγησις . . . πραγμάτων, an account of transactions. His later book, giving an account of the activities of the Early Church, had for its title Πράξεις τῶν Ἀποστόλων. A line, it is true, can be drawn between πράξεις and πράγματα, but the ease with which the distinction can disappear is shown by the Latin title *Acta Apostolorum—actus* would represent the stricter use of πράξεις. As early as the second century the single word πράξεις had become a recognized title for the book, as, indeed, Acts is still with us. But can any one imagine that great book being called 'Things?' Coming to a later period, Eusebius the historian, among the opening words, in which he defines his purpose, says that he is going 'to recount how many and important *transactions* are said to have occurred in ecclesiastical history,' ὅσα τε καὶ πηλίκα πραγματευθῆναι κατὰ τὴν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν ἱστορίαν. The word chosen by two such writers for affairs of so vital importance must, obviously, be treated as significant.

It is by no means a word which is used casually, like our 'Things.' It only occurs eleven times in the whole New Testament, three of which are in Hebrews. It will be as well to look at the other two in Hebrews before dealing with 11^{1}. In 6^{18} the R.V. has 'By two immutable things (πραγμάτων), in which it is impossible for God to lie.' But the reference is not to two things, but two actions, and these actions had been stated, not by nouns, but by verbs (*vv.*$^{13.\ 17}$).

The other occurrence is 10^{1}. 'The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things' (τῶν πραγμάτων). The Law, in Hebrews, is most decidedly a set of actions. The particular reference here is to the sacrifices. The victims, no doubt, were things, but the sacrifices were actions. As Hebrews is here speaking of things to come, it is relevant to notice the contrast between the Apocalypse and Hebrews. The former, in speaking of the world to come, mentions all sorts of things, lamps, robes, and so on. But Hebrews avoids anything of the kind. It contains no description of the furniture of the heavenly places or of the building materials of the New Jerusalem. The author's entire interest lies in what is done and who does it.

Now, to consider 11^{1} itself. As there is a dispute —unnecessary in my opinion—whether πράγματα is to be understood in the first clause, I will confine myself to the second clause, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων. These words, and indeed the verse as a whole, must not be taken in isolation. They are not an *obiter dictum*, but a remark in the course of an argument. We are therefore justified in looking to the context for some indication of the nature of the πράγματα in question. Now, the subject of the chapter, which leads up to our verse, is Christ's activity as High Priest. This includes His dealing with our affairs, and the presentation of His plea for the human race—for that is what His sacrifice amounts to. This is followed by the consideration of our action in 'drawing near.' This again leads into the subject of patience, which, to our author, is an active and not a passive virtue. Plainly, the πράγματα are actions, not things.

Coming to the clause we are discussing—a certain light is cast on πραγ. by the word which is combined with it, ἔλεγχος. The root idea of the word-group is well put by Milligan in his remark that the verb ἔλεγχω, the 'convict' of the Fourth Gospel, means 'to bring to light the true character of a man and his conduct.' It is relevant to point out that Ecclus $19^{13.\ 14.\ 15}$ and ^{17} show how disastrous is the effect of translating the verb ἔλεγχω as 'Reprove' or 'Admonish.' For example, the R.V. for $v.^{15}$ is 'Reprove a friend: for many times there is slander: and trust not every word.' This is sheer nonsense. Reproof would be the very worst way of eliciting the truth. This verse, and, indeed, the whole passage, in which the verb is used four times, is speaking of careful investigation. In He 11^{1} the investigation is of πραγμάτων . . . οὐ βλεπομένων unseen activities: 'Unseen' is plainly, equivalent to 'spiritual.' Now spiritual activities are the activities of spirits, and spirits are persons. The ἔλεγχος is, therefore, a searching into, and discovery of, the activities of spiritual beings.

The context, which follows 11^{1}, consists of a long series of examples, showing faith in its tentative stage, using that kind of venturesome experiment which is so well known to us in modern science. The words which lead off are significant, 'By

faith we understand (*νοοῦμεν*) that the worlds[1] have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear' (R.V.). According to the new Liddell and Scott, *νοοῦμεν* means (1) perceive with the eyes, observe, (2) perceive by the mind. This is nothing less than active investigation. It is the careful observation of a type of spiritual process. This is, of course, very different from the common idea of faith as the acceptation of the unprovable. In the illustrative examples given in Hebrews, it reaches its acme in Moses, who was stedfast 'because, so to speak, he saw the Unseen.' *τὸν γὰρ ἀόρατον ὡς ὁρῶν ἐκαρτέρησεν* (He 11^{27}). This kind of faith received the highest approbation of Christ Himself. In the incident recorded by both Matthew and Luke, the centurion perceived the existence of an active spiritual organization, dependent on our Lord. Jesus signalled this as the most marvellous and outstanding example of faith which He had encountered. 'When Jesus heard it . . . he marvelled and said, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel,' Lk 7^{9}.

This incident—not to mention the preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven—suggests another implication of the word *πράγματα*. The idea of communal affairs is specifically attached to it. The plural is often used in much the same way as the Latin *respublicæ*. It is true that no example of this usage appears to occur in the Septuagint. Nor is it to be found in the New Testament, though the use of *πολιτεύω*, both in it and outside it, shows that the idea was clearly in the minds of the early Christians. And Hebrews certainly contains the description of the heavenly *respublica* ('Ye are come . . . unto the city of the living God,' etc., $12^{22ff.}$). Indeed, the passage contains a phrase which is characteristic of the Greek city-state, *ἐκκλησία . . . ἀπογεγραμμένων*, the meeting of citizens whose names are on the register. The writer is not foretelling the future, but drawing the attention of his readers to the facts of their situation. The introductory words 'Ye are come' show that the heavenly *respublica* is the field in which they are already placed. Its affairs are to be the prime object of the Christian's interest. The actual word *πράγματα* may not occur in the passage, but the idea is there, and the connexion with 11^{1} is plain.

As a bridge to another well-known implication of *πρᾶγμα*, we may quote a phrase of Clement's, in the introductory and definitive statement of his Epistle to the Corinthians, 'the questions disputed among you,'[1] *περὶ τῶν ἐπιζητουμένων παρ' ὑμιν πραγμάτων*. These were not doctrinal questions. They concerned the deposition of certain rulers in the Church. Clement is giving a judicial statement, and making a studied plea in answer to an appeal in what is essentially a legal dispute. Now, as the *Vocabulary* states, 'the noun is common in the Papyri as equalling Lawsuit, as in 1 Co 6^{1}'—which reads, 'Dare any of you having a matter (*πρᾶγμα ἔχων*) against his neighbour go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints' (R.V.).

This juridical sense of *πρᾶγμα* has at least an echo in the general tone of the Epistle, Hebrews may well be described as the systematic putting of a case, or a 'counsel's opinion.' At the point in the Epistle around which our interest centres, there is a deliberate marshalling of evidence by accredited witnesses (11^{4}–12^{1}). The note comes out clearly in other places. Thus in 6^{16b} come the words *πάσης αὐτοῖς ἀντιλογίας πέρας εἰς βεβαίωσιν ὁ ὅρκος*, 'in every dispute of theirs the oath is final for confirmation' (R.V.). It is to be noted that we are here in the midst of the discussion of an undertaking made on oath, so that we are in a forensic atmosphere. This atmosphere is made all the more evident by the word *βεβαίωσις*. Deissmann showed that the word must always be read with a technical legal sense (viz. guaranteed security).

Another word in the clause just quoted, *ἀντιλογία*, belongs to the same category. Of the twelve examples in the Old Testament four are vague, but eight are quite definitive for Controversy. Thus in Ex 18^{16} (R.V.), 'When they have a matter,' *ὅταν γὰρ γένηται αὐτοῖς ἀντιλογία*, 'they come to me; and I judge between a man and his neighbour.' Another, Dt 1^{12}, is so curious that it must be mentioned. The sense of the passage is defined by its forming the introduction to the setting up of a judicial system. It begins (R.V.), 'How can I bear your cumbrance, your burden and your strife (*ἀντιλογία*).' Strange to say, the word, which

[1] *τοὺς αἰῶνας*, systems of life. 'Things' in this sentence translates a neuter, but it is to be remembered that a Greek neuter does not necessarily indicate something impersonal, as does an English neuter.

[1] Kirsopp Lake's translation.

stands in the LXX in place of 'Burden,' is ὑπόστασις, the opening word of He 11[1].

It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to dilate on the forensic flavour which attaches to ἔλεγχος. But we may be allowed to quote two examples, given by Grimm, in which the words πρᾶγμα and ἔλεγχος are conjoined. These are, τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸν ἔλεγχον δώσει. Dem. 44, 45 and ἐνθαδ' ὁ ἔλεγχος τοῦ πράγματος.

It is not suggested that, in Hebrews, the words which we have mentioned are to be taken exclusively, or even primarily, in a legal sense. But one usage of a word cannot be detached from all the others. The various meanings of a word form a complex from which the word can never be divorced. The occurrence of the words, which have been instanced, show that judicial investigation and even legal procedure lay at the back of the writer's mind, and determined the cast of his statement. Judging from the general style of the Epistle and its formally 'apologetic' manner, it would appear to be at least possible that the writer had learned his craft in the courts.

Another important connexion, with which πρᾶγμα is involved, must be mentioned. It is not unfair to say that, in the κοινή, it is *the* word for 'Business.' Owing to causes, on which we need not enter here, we shrink, nowadays, from describing religion as business, in the ordinary sense of that word. Yet, after all, business is the chief cause and field of the general intercourse of mankind. The early Christians were drawn from the commercial stratum of society. I do not believe that we can understand their thoughts unless we remember that. And if we dislike setting business and faith side by side, we shall do well to ponder the fact that, in the commercial papyri, which speak the business language of the day, not only is πρᾶγμα prominent, but an important part is played by the actual word πίστις, 'Faith,' just as good faith is still the foundation of all satisfactory business. Even if the word 'Business' is eyed askance, 'Commerce' is still a noble word, though it would be still nobler if we were more accustomed to phrases like Milton's 'looks commercing with the skies.'

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

The Easter Token.

By the Reverend Ronald W. Thomson, Burton-on-Trent.

'Never forget "Jesus Christ risen from the dead"'—2 Ti 2[8] (Moffatt).

In a famous and charming book of travel A. W. Kinglake describes a weary march across a desert. Under a flaming sky the party of travellers pushed on. The fierce sun was burning all their energy out of them. At last it seemed that they could go not a step farther. That night, the eighth night of travel, the Arab guides to the party realized that the travellers were at the end of their strength. And one of the guides left the party and made his way through the night to the West. Many hours later he came back and rejoined the party. He brought with him one thing which he knew would hearten the travellers and give them new strength. It was an ear of rice, full, fresh, and green. From the place of desert and sterility and death he had travelled as far as the border of the green world and brought back the ear of rice as a sure token that not so very far ahead lay that world of pleasantness and greenness. When they saw that little token the travellers did indeed pluck up fresh courage to press onward.

Jesus did something like that on the first Easter morning. He journeyed to the world beyond, and brought back to the travellers of earth a token that beyond the dark valley is sunshine and life. He himself was the living token. His return from beyond the borders of that world of sunshine was a proof to all His friends that love cannot be defeated. And the disciples were so cheered by this knowledge that they began to hold their heads higher, they refused to be frightened and beaten by evil and disaster. They became new men. They were also firmly convinced from that moment that Jesus was with them. They could not always see Him, but they knew He was close to them—their Lord and Leader—guiding them and inspiring

them. The maddest enterprises were now glorious possibilities to them. If their lives ended in martyrdom, death in the arena by the lion's paw or the gladiator's sword, they still kept their peace and their assurance.

The pagan mob of those days was so troubled by the calmness of the disciples, and their certainty that all would be well, that, when the aged Bishop Polycarp died in the arena, they took his body, burnt it and scattered the ashes to the four winds. 'Now,' they cried, 'what of your boasts? How can this man ever live again?' But the little band of Christians only smiled at such a poor effort to destroy the eternal soul. They had the token of a Living Presence, a Living Love, a Living Peace. They had seen Jesus rise from the dead, seen Him beat death, tear the crown from its brow. They knew that there was no end to love, that every true disciple was clothed with the power of an endless life.

The Easter bells will not ring from our churches this year, but I hope they will ring in each heart. Ring out their message that Jesus is risen; that He is the token that within each of us is the beautiful life of God; that the house of life may perish but the real ME lives on. Because of that message we can transform ugliness into beauty, falsehood into truth, evil into good—for we shall know that however strong evil appears to be at the moment it cannot win.

A Boy who had a Friend.

By the Reverend Sidney H. Price, Great Shelford, Cambridge.

'The eloquent orator.'—Is 3^3.

Many years ago a boy was born in Greece, and they named him Demosthenes, probably because his father was named Demosthenes. When the boy was only seven years of age his father died, and the boy and his younger sister were left to the care of three men as guardians. It was their duty to look after the property the father left, and to see that the children were properly cared for and educated. The men, however, were not true friends, and they squandered the money and neglected the children's education. When Demosthenes was eighteen, he should have received his share of the property, but found it had been wasted. He therefore accused one of his guardians before the court, and won his case.

This victory led him to a great decision. He made up his mind to be a public speaker. The people of Greece in those days considered it a great honour to be a public speaker. There were well-known names in those days, on the lips of ordinary people, just as the names of film stars or famous sportsmen are known to-day. We are told, however, that Demosthenes was quite unfit for such work. His voice was weak and his speech defective. Some say he could not pronounce his 'r' and that he stammered. But he had made up his mind, and he set to work to overcome his weakness. He was fortunate in having a friend who could help him, one who was himself a well-known speaker. This friend taught him the art of speaking, but Demosthenes himself had to struggle to overcome his faults. He did so in an unusual way. He used to run up hill, reciting poetry as he ran, to strengthen his voice. To overcome the habit of shrugging one shoulder, he would sometimes practise speaking with a sharp-pointed sword suspended from the ceiling in such a way that it would prick his shoulder every time he shrugged it.

It looks as though speakers in those days often had very noisy audiences. They might be called out to speak to an angry mob to try and avoid a riot. To prepare himself to speak in an uproar, he practised shouting to the waves on the seashore.

He so far overcame his faults of speech that, at thirty years of age, he had a reputation as a public speaker. He realized what a gift it was, and knew that such power enabled him to influence men either to do good or evil, so he decided his gift should be used for the good of his people.

If all these stories are true about Demosthenes we must place him in the ranks of the great overcomers. A man who had weak lungs and imperfect speech, yet who became the greatest orator in Athens, a city of great speakers, is a man whose perseverance should encourage us.

We also have weaknesses and faults to overcome, and we also can make good. Demosthenes had a friend who knew how to help him. He also had the determination to master himself. We too have a Friend who can help us to overcome faults, One who knows all about us. He was tempted in every way as we are. He can help us to become strong where we are weak, but, like Demosthenes, we ourselves must be determined to overcome.

If to-day you make up your mind that you are going to overcome that hasty temper, or that fear that prevents you speaking the truth sometimes, or that selfishness, or whatever your failings may be, and, if you come to your best Friend the Lord Jesus, and ask Him to help you, then you will be like Demosthenes, one of the great overcomers.

The Christian Year.

Easter Day.

By the Reverend John Howat, B.D., Ballater.

'Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'—1 Co 15[57].

Once again on Easter morning we are met to lift up our hearts in rejoicing. For Easter takes us right to the heart of our faith, and reveals the incurable optimism that is Christianity. Had there been no Easter, there would have been no Church, no gospel of man's redemption, no Holy Scriptures, none of the confidence and assurance that are ours in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is on the foundation of Easter that the Christian Church was built; and it is round it that the whole fabric of the Christian faith has been woven. Here on the truth of Easter we take our stand; it is the rock of our confidence, against which the storms and tides of fortune beat in vain.

It is right that now and again we should analyse the grounds of this Christian assurance that sends us out into the world with head uplifted, a brave song upon our lips, and indefatigable hearts. How is it, when all about us we see the collapse of things most precious, the destruction of things which for generations we have learned to honour and cherish, that we can face it all in the spirit of conquerors? One by one we have watched the lights go out in Europe; and seen the decencies of life extinguished. We have seen the civilization, from which we hoped so much, entering another dark age, more gross, more horrible perhaps, than any that has gone before. How can we go on singing our Easter hymns, proclaiming the victory of light and life over darkness and death? Are we only fooling ourselves, obstinately refusing to face reality, creating our own little fairyland of escape from the ugliness and bestiality that are spreading everywhere?

Of course spring is here; and no man can dwell for ever in the snowdrifts of depression, when all about him the bursting life of spring dispels the weary death of winter. Every race has had its festival of spring; but it is not because of that that we raise our hymns of praise to God. The succession of summer and winter may reflect man's changing moods of hope and despair, but it gives no ground for the confidence that triumphs over every changing mood. It is not in the works of Nature that man finds the roots of his indomitable faith.

'Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,' declared St. Paul, and it is to that One that we go for all our confidence. It is His victory that we recall and the victory that is ours through Him. It is so easy to miss the whole significance of the Easter victory won by Christ, to make it something less than it is, to make it something that we clutch at selfishly, to make it a kind of pledge of something that will come to us when we die. The Easter message is not something to do with what we vaguely call the next world, but something that is a life-and-death matter for us now, wherever we are and whatever we are doing.

Let us all face this issue that Christ thrusts upon every man. For Easter gives us a choice, a choice that is fundamental. There are those who say that the fact of Easter is a matter of historical demonstration. The empty tomb and the appearances to the disciples prove conclusively that on the third day Jesus rose from the dead. Something tremendous must have occurred to convince the disciples that Jesus, whom they had seen crucified and buried in the tomb in Joseph of Arimathea's garden, was alive and risen. It was in the strength of that conviction that they came together again and faced an angry, hostile world as courageous apostles of the faith. But when all this is said, the Resurrection of Jesus remains a matter of faith, and our acceptance or rejection of the Church's claim that Jesus rose from the grave depends in the last resort on our conception of the ultimate reality behind all things, of the meaning of existence, or, as we would put it, of the character and purpose of Almighty God.

For it comes to this. From the human point of view the Crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth on the Cross at Golgotha was an ignominious end to the dreams and aspirations of One who had come to found a universal kingdom of righteousness and love and peace among men. The ministry of Jesus ended in abject failure. As the sun set on the first Good Friday, and His friends removed the body of their Master from the tree for burial, that was the end of the story. The forces of evil had won in the struggle between Jesus and His enemies. Pilate and Caiaphas had had the last word. Their judgment had been final. Nothing that Jesus had done had reversed their verdict; His whole ministry founded on strong faith in His Father in heaven had been based on an illusion. Where was the kingdom that He had come to establish? Where were the peace, and righteousness and love? If Calvary was the end, the universe had spoken

clearly and emphatically, and no power in heaven or on earth had intervened to alter that verdict.

We must grasp the full significance of that. If the complete and final destruction of Jesus was accomplished on His Cross, then the ultimate power at the back of all things, however we may conceive it, is inherently evil. Brute force triumphs over love; falsehood over truth; evil over righteousness. If the Cross of Jesus is final, the whole work of Jesus is founded on a lie; and what is more, all our attempts to establish justice on earth, all our dreams of peace and brotherhood and freedom, are nothing more than unsubstantial fancies with no ground in reality. Life becomes the veriest nightmare if the Cross is final.

But there is the other alternative, that the Cross is not the end; that the death of Jesus was not the close of the story; that there is a God on high, who is love and justice and truth, and who raised up His Son victorious over death and the grave. It all depends on what you believe about God. If God is the Father of all men, if God is what Jesus believed and taught Him to be, if God did send Him to found a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men, then God could not have allowed His Son to die for ever. The ignominy and shame of the Cross, the dust and ashes of an eastern grave, can we believe for one minute that these were the purpose of the All-highest for the Holy One who trod this earth full of grace and truth? If we can, then God is neither justice nor truth nor love, and Jesus was deceived in Him as we have been.

That is the choice that Easter places before each of us. In the end each man must choose for himself, and on his choice depends his whole attitude to life. The answer of the Church has always been the Easter faith, that the Cross was not the end, that Pilate and Caiaphas were not victorious, that God was not unheeding, but that Jesus rose triumphant. It is to that same daring act of faith that the Church summons men in every age. Whatever advances evil may make, at the back of all things is One, who is greater than all the powers of evil, who became Man, and was crucified and rose again the third day.

Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. That is the Christian's assurance in the fight of life. In the end Christ's way of truth and love will win. Even though it be crucified, it will rise again. In the eternal warfare with evil the Church summons each man of faith to play his part with confidence and joy, knowing that the forces of sin will one day be routed and the reign of righteousness begin. It is in that confidence we can face the world with undaunted hearts. Nothing that can happen can take that joy from us. The dominion of brutish things may advance and go forward, so that many lose heart and fall into despair; but the Christian, who has seen into the heart of Him, who is the Eternal Father, who with clear and unclouded eye has looked upon the shame of Calvary, who has entered into the glorious secret of the Easter victory, knows that in this woeful world of destruction and death there is something which never can be destroyed, something that even the Cross cannot obliterate, that which we have seen in all its majesty and grace and winsomeness in Jesus Christ. In a dying world *that* only lives; amidst things temporal that pass away *that* only is eternal; in the defeat and destruction of so much *there* lies the true and ultimate victory in Jesus Christ. That is the faith we throw in the world's face to-day; that is why we join in these songs of triumph. Out of the grave of humanity's sin there has risen this new Man, this firstborn among many brethren, He who is the Resurrection and the Life.

That is what makes Easter the foundation of the Church's whole faith and assurance and hope. We make this Easter faith something less than it really is if we think of it only as a kind of pledge that when we die we shall go to heaven. There is an element of truth in that rather crude expression of the doctrine of everlasting life. But what the Church and Christianity are more particularly concerned with is not some vague kind of future existence for men after death, but the fact that there is a certain kind of life, a certain quality of life that is indestructible and eternal. That is where the emphasis must be placed. Not on something that may be ours hereafter, but on something that can be ours now, something that we see in all its fulness in Jesus Christ, the life that is of God. The man who has seen that, and grasped it, this life of Christ, this life in Christ, has touched the life of God, that is undying and imperishable.

First Sunday after Easter.

Life's Responsibility.

By the Reverend E. L. Allen, M.A., Ph.D.,
King's College, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

'The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.'—Lk 16^{8}.

Not all the parables are equally convincing as illustrations of spiritual truth, and most readers, one imagines, find more difficulty in this one than

in almost any other. One great difficulty is removed, however, when we have seen that the 'lord' who in this verse commends the dishonest steward is not Jesus Himself, but simply the man's employer in the story. Our Lord does not approve the conduct he describes, though He finds something in it to serve as a lesson to His hearers. It is one of the most daring features of His teaching that He seeks His illustrations from human life, not always in what is best in it, but sometimes in its more questionable aspects. Thus He tells of a judge who has to be forced by a petitioner's sheer persistence into listening to her, and infers from this how much more confident we can be that God who is our Father will hear our prayers. In this case the action of the steward is morally inexcusable; nevertheless there is that in it which deserves to be imitated in a better cause.

The steward finds himself confronted with a sudden crisis. The smooth flow of events has ceased, his past is to be scrutinized and his future therefore becomes highly questionable. Under these circumstances what does he do? Does he wait to see what will happen? Not at all, he is afoot immediately, he thinks and plans and acts. He takes stock of his situation, and finds that if he does not take it seriously the result will be disaster for him, so he summons all his resources to prevent that. He goes to work quite shamelessly, of course, falsifying the accounts which are in the hands of his master's debtors in order to make it their interest to give him hospitality until he can find another post. But at any rate he is successful in what he undertakes, and when the day of trial comes round, he emerges from it approved instead of being condemned. He is clearly a man who has all his wits about him; danger does but serve to sharpen his intelligence, and he will not allow himself to be discomfited by the most adverse circumstances.

Now contrast with all this the contemporaries of Jesus. They too were confronted with a crisis, for He had come to bring them before the judgment-seat of God. But how did they act? They were indifferent, absorbed in their own affairs, and refusing to take His message seriously. Yet no less was at stake than the existence of the Jewish community, for Jesus saw that friction between them and their Roman overlords was bound to increase from year to year, and His bitter cry over Jerusalem shows that He anticipated its destruction. How was it that men were so unaware of what was clear to His eyes, that they could foretell the next day's weather from the evening sky, but were so pathetically blind to the obvious signs of the times? If only they could be persuaded to take a leaf from this man's book, to think and plan and act, to be willing, as he was willing, to revise their whole scheme of life in order to meet the peril which threatened!

It was true in those days that 'the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light,' and it seems to be always so. It is disconcerting to find how much easier it is to enlist men's intelligence and energy in a bad cause than in a good one. Contrast, for example, Hitler's tireless struggle for the rearmament of Germany with the half-hearted allegiance of the democracies to the League of Nations. We can go a step further and point out how much men will do for their private and immediate interests and how impossible it seems to be to get them to do anything comparable for the life of the spirit. Yes, in the one case how carefully we distribute our time and thought so as to secure the maximum result, while in the other case we are content merely to gather up such fragments of them as are left over from our other occupations.

The prophet Malachi had this to contend with in his day. He points out with what meticulous care men select a gift for their Persian governor, while they are slipshod and indifferent when it is only a question of an offering for God! 'Millions of people follow the teaching of this man,' said a Russian guide to an American tourist whom he was showing round the mausoleum of Lenin, 'but who follows the teaching of Christ?' Put in that way, the assertion is a complete falsification of the facts, yet is there not an element of truth in it? How often has it been noted that the gospel of Karl Marx seems to command a devotion which is not given by Christians to their evangel! To-day, when we read of the reckless daring of our young airmen, how often do we say to ourselves: If only these qualities could be put to some worthier use! But here again the children of this world have an advantage over the children of light: the slogan 'King and country' seems so much more potent than that other 'Christ and His Kingdom.'

Where, however, many who see and regret all this go wrong is that they offer a too-easy explanation of it; they ascribe it to sin, to sheer human wickedness. I would say rather that it springs out of the inevitable limitations which attend upon our life in this world. We must profess our faith that the things which are unseen are also eternal; nevertheless the things which are seen and temporal have a hold upon us which it is never easy to shake off. To put the matter crudely for the sake of clearness,

we all know that if we neglect our prayers we shall not shorten our lives by a single day, whereas if we neglect our meals the result will be death! The difficulty which besets the claims of the spiritual life is that our immediate interests are in the field already, and that they are so urgent and absorbing that we need to exercise the utmost vigilance lest they capture us altogether. God in His wisdom has made this world so that the things which are of most value in it do not come about by instinct or force of habit, but need to be maintained in being by will and effort on our part.

That is why we need a Church, because the things which are seen and temporal have such an initial advantage over everything else. We have to maintain the life of the spirit, but we can never hope to do so by our private effort only. How could we hold out against the pressure of an ever-insistent environment by ourselves? But when we enter the Church, we enter a society which is organized expressly to affirm the things which are unseen and eternal, and by its worship and service to win us for them. Over against the material environment in which we live and which is constantly making its demands upon us, she creates by God's help another environment in which there is a different measure of human worth and what belongs to the spirit is supreme. It is her task to discipline the children of light till in their generation they become as wise as the children of the world in theirs; and countless noble lives from St. Francis of Assisi to Schweitzer show how well she has succeeded in so doing.

In this way we have explained how it is that God's share in human life is so much less than it should be, and also how the balance can to some extent be redressed in its favour. That, however, is not all. We are still faced with the fact that even we who have been brought up in the Christian tradition and have so much Christian experience on which to draw, are yet often less in earnest about our religion than we are about our daily work or our annual holiday. In the one case, how we scheme and contrive, what ingenuity we employ, how we refuse to be put off! And in the other, how soon we lose heart and how easily we accept defeat! Let us close with the words of the dying Wolsey to Cromwell, and let us turn them into a prayer that, when our last days come, we may be spared any such regrets:

> O Cromwell, Cromwell!
> Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
> I serv'd my king, He would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

More than Conquerors.

'In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.'—Ro 8^{37}.

Dr. Alfred Noyes once said that when he found himself in a disheartened and discouraged mood he often turned for relief to the published letters of Robert Louis Stevenson. It is a heartening and inspiring thing when moments of discouragement come to get into touch with a great soul. But there are other letters to which we can turn in dark and difficult days. There are passages in the letters written to the Christian Churches in the New Testament which contain heartening words that we can read for our help in trying hours. Let us take these closing verses of the eighth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and find in them help and inspiration. They are radiant with wonderful assurances and unshakable certainty for the Christian in a world where so much conspires to lay him low. We realize that radiance when we consider Paul's deliberately written list of the enemies of the soul. He is writing on the eve of his last journey to Jerusalem and he knows, only too well, what may await him there. Even so, he will go forward, for nothing can separate the Christian from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. Even if he *feels*, as so many of us do in similar circumstances, that these things may separate him from God's love, he will teach himself, as every Christian must, to be independent of his feelings. Finally, he deliberately sets down a list of ills that might have been compiled by the veriest pessimist. It is a catalogue of life's problems and its deadly cruelties. One might think it sufficient to win a victory over such a formidable combination of foes. But this amazing man is not content to be a mere conqueror. 'In all these things we are *more than conquerors* through him that loved us.'

'*More than conquerors!*' This is the phrase that leaps to the eye. What conceivable meaning can we find in it? What is this spiritual triumph in which the great Apostle exults? Most of us, sooner or later, must come to terms with tribulation in one form or another. Trials and troubles are part of life's inescapable elements. Sometimes they come singly and we may feel that we can cope with them. Often they come in droves and then they overwhelm us. We are living through trying times so far as the world situation is concerned. Statesmen everywhere are carrying a burden that must be well-nigh overwhelming. They need our criticism less than they need our prayers. One cannot tell

what a day may bring forth. Personal life, too, is set in the midst of a sea of troubles. Some are physically handicapped by ill-health. Others are overwhelmed by misfortune and hardships. Life often seems to conspire to rob us of our peace of mind, and one is cast down by one thing after another. Yet all these are implied, or included, in Paul's list of ills. What is the secret of his victory?

Many can travel *part* of the way with Paul. It is a heartening and encouraging thing to know men and women who are meeting misfortune bravely. Their sorrows are not allowed to crush them; they refuse to be broken by them. They hold their heads high. Many of our business friends are finding things difficult and yet they inspire us by their spirit of dogged perseverance. In the face of life's ills many are patiently and courageously struggling on. Yet if we were allowed to share their inmost confidence we would conclude that though they are conquerors they are not more than conquerors. Most of us, if pressed, would have to make this confession. We find strength to stand up to our trials when they come and to present a brave exterior to the world, but behind the scenes we are deeply conscious of moral weakness and spiritual defeat. Is it not so with many of us? Conquerors? Yes. 'More than conquerors?' No! We may claim a victory, but it is a partial victory. It is not complete.

It is a complete victory, not only for himself, but for every Christian soul, that Paul celebrates in this great passage of Scripture. We can be victors not only in our outward relations with our fellow-creatures, but in the inward realm of our own souls. Such was the victory that Paul had won. It is celebrated again and again in his epistles. He had the right to speak for he had undergone most, if not all, of the hardships and disabilities that he has written down for the Roman Christians to read. He had suffered bitter persecution not only from the pagan community he set out to evangelize, but from those to whom he had the right to look for understanding and help. Yet there is not the slightest hint in any of his letters of resentment against his persecutors.

More, this is one of the dominant notes in the New Testament! In its pages we meet with company after company of Christian people, who lived for their faith in times of much persecution and difficulty. And throughout subsequent centuries there have not been lacking great-hearted Christian men and women whose lives bear the same witness to the overwhelming victory that can be the portion of us all. Their secret is simple after all. It lies in the region of faith. They believed that nothing could separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Of course, *it was a great faith.* Of course, it was a mighty conviction to hold. We must constantly remind ourselves that the very essence of such a faith is that it asserts itself in the teeth of challenging facts. But in the very conflict of faith with these challenging experiences of life faith wins its strength. 'This is the victory that *overcomes* the world, even our faith.'

Let us keep that thought in mind when the next test comes. Strength to overcome every challenging circumstance is won from the conflict itself. That is why Paul sets his conviction in such a dark context. This truth can be illustrated from every field of life. Many have pointed out that we gain in physical strength, not by tackling things that lie within our power, not by doing things that are easy of accomplishment, but by facing up to tasks that lie just a little bit beyond us, things that are difficult to achieve. If we persevere we shall achieve our aim. When we have achieved it we are not merely conquerors, we are strengthened to face a greater strain, we are ready for even harder tasks. We are *more* than conquerors. The same is true in the mental realm. We gain in mental power not by attempting the solution of problems that are easy of solution, but by facing up to those that are difficult to solve. If we persevere we shall solve them. When we have done so we have not only mastered the difficult problem, we have gained a mental power to face others more difficult still. So is it in the *spiritual* realm. So is it in this conflict of faith and circumstance. There is bound to be tension and strain and spiritual warfare if our faith is to grow in strength. Every temptation faced and overcome, every lower mood met and mastered, means spiritual strength gained for a greater conflict. Every battle fought and won means power acquired for a stiffer fight when the need arises. Faith grows, and spiritual strength with it, in the inevitable conflict with the challenging, denying, circumstances of life. This is the law of spiritual growth.

But even that is not all. *There are other gains to count.* Paul is carefully choosing his words when he says, '*In all these things* we are more than conquerors.' He means that even *life's misfortunes can become a means of blessing,* that trouble can be a means of power for service, that life's disablements can become an equipment for the spiritual conflict. When we really face up to 'these things'

with the conviction that 'nothing can separate us from the love of God,' they cease to be enemies and become friends.

All we have done, or nobly failed in doing,
All we have been, or bravely striven to be,
Makes for our gain, within or still surviving
As power and larger liberty.

Whence did Paul win his conviction that God is love? What made it so overwhelmingly convincing? Were you to ask him that he would take you to a hill called Calvary, he would bid you look at the Figure on the central cross, dying amid absorbing agony. He would ask you to listen to some of the most moving words ever uttered by dying lips, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.'

God has gone to the utmost lengths to convince you of His love, that His power is available for you if you will only believe it. Take up this conviction that 'nothing can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.' It is the sluice-gate that you can open and so release in your life the almighty power of the Everlasting God. We speak of physical power and we have learned of its inexhaustible possibilities. Every time men launch a *Queen Elizabeth* they are co-operating with physical power. Every time an aeroplane rises into the sky the same thing happens. Men are neither conquering the ocean nor the air. They are co-operating with physical power. That is the real conquest.

Spiritual power is likewise available. It surrounds us. It came to its clearest forms in Jesus Christ. It is available for us if only we would use it. Take up this conviction. Open the sluice-gate and let the tides of God's Spirit flow into your life.[1]

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Ambassadors of Christ.

BY THE REVEREND L. J. BALLARD, M.A., HARPENDEN.

'We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ.'—2 Co 5^{20} (R.V.).

This great statement of fact does not move us as it should to-day, because we need to find again the dignity attached to the true ambassador. The ordinary man has come to regard with suspicion the work of ambassadors. Dismal failures naturally bring dishonour upon the best professions. In recent times, moreover, many people are pseudo-experts in the conduct of international affairs; misunderstandings of the task and function of those who are accredited ambassadors have produced attacks more bitter than discerning, upon the whole art of negotiation. 'If I had been the ambassador in . . .' may be a subject for warm argument now, and it may well provoke thanks that the honoured traditions of embassies were not more rudely shattered. For the approach to the task of an ambassador is well defined and limited even though the possibilities and opportunities are unlimited. He does not go simply to bring his own ideas to bear upon the conduct of others' affairs. Nor does he go as an adviser, to interfere by threat or persuasion in their affairs. He goes, knowing the mind of his king or the settled policy of his government, to make those things clear to that sovereign to whose court he is accredited. This is the first essential for any ambassador. For the Christian it means sharing the mind of Christ; it means knowing the will of God, as it is revealed in His perfect Ambassador. In the second place, the task of the ambassador is to recommend this given policy, to negotiate for other decisions to be in harmony with it, to set forth the king's interests.

It is most likely that the original ambassadors were chosen for negotiation between rivals who, because of quarrels or mistaken ideas about prestige, could not meet together. The office was certainly abused later on, as ambassadors saw in their appointment the opportunity to boast about their sovereign's wealth and honour. Exaggerated ideas of worth, and pompous forms to show them forth have cast suspicion upon the real dignity of the office. Efforts were made to show how rich a king was by the maintenance of a large entourage. The recent departure of our own ambassador to the United States would no doubt have been less impressive in peace time; but what was dictated by naval necessity to-day would have been one of the ways chosen to add prestige to an envoy's mission.

The rediscovery of the simple dignity belonging to this office has indeed been welcome in these last few years. For the responsibility is such that it needs no artificial trappings. To sign treaties on behalf of His Majesty, to protest in his name where some suggested venture is inimical to his interests, to encourage a sound understanding of the ideals of his subjects, to express concern in loss or disaster, all this is honour enough for the single-minded ambassador.

In his excellent book upon Diplomacy, Mr. H. Nicholson sets forth what are the minimum require-

[1] J. Short, *All Things Are Yours*, 282.

ments in a good ambassador—truth, accuracy, calm, patience, good temper, modesty, loyalty. In addition, he takes for granted that intelligence, knowledge, discernment, prudence, hospitality, charm, industry, courage, and tact are already there. The list may cause some dismay to those of us who had realized that the text applied to us, and who have tried faithfully to fulfil its obligations. It is all the more important then that we learn what we can from one who knows so well what makes or mars an ambassador.

Most of these virtues can be cultivated for the more perfect discharge of our duties as His ambassador. The list is not an impossible one, for all these virtues grow, given the right circumstances and attention. They are virtues found in God's greatest Ambassador; they are virtues which He can communicate to those who learn in His school. Any lack just so much mars one's efficiency and creates new difficulties. Under the peculiar conditions of an ambassador's work, each quality shows up, helping to turn his difficulties into opportunities as he commends the sympathy, imagination, and resolution of his king. This is just the work of ambassadors of Christ.

Mr. Nicholson suggests some of the special difficulties to be overcome. The staff of an embassy is always conscious of being a minority; the differences of language demand extra alertness; much depends upon the loyalty of the staff to each other, and so much depends upon the discretion of the ambassador. How true are these things of Christians!

(*a*) We are in a minority. It sometimes seems that the great regions of human activity, its commerce, its politics, its pleasure, its loving, are indifferent to our existence, and unconscious of our mission. There are many words from our Lord to combat the gloom of such moods. He says, reminding us of His responsibility for sending us out, 'I have chosen you.' Numbers and size are poor criteria in the sight of God. He is greatest who serves most faithfully. Moreover, there is no need to cable a Foreign Office for instructions; 'where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I.'

(*b*) Differences in language sometimes lead to difficulties. An unfamiliar idiom, an allusion to an unknown statement, or a word used in its original rather than its current meaning may easily cause uncertainty or worse. We feel all these difficulties. Our creeds and hymns are not in popular language. Altruistic motives are interpreted as ineffective ones where concern for self is of primary importance. The Christian's concern for life and order beyond the conventionally respectable is sometimes taken as an unwarranted interference, springing from hypocritical motives. Here again the Christian need not feel handicapped. Deeds count. The cup of cold water given in His name is eloquent beyond words. It is well to note the remark of a distinguished ambassador, M. Cambon, who said, 'The most persuasive method at the disposal of a government is the word of an honest man.'

(*c*) Much depends upon loyalty to each other. In an embassy staff living together, personal relationships want watching. At the worst, some may be unduly ambitious; this will lead to self-seeking and to exaggeration, *e.g.* in reports home to influential people. Or the staff might manage to be more ordinary, outwardly civil, but with discord within. Our Christian fellowships, composed as they are of many more diversities of temperament, have always been aware of these inevitable difficulties. Many years ago, however, an example was set. The genuine family-relationship within the Christian community provoked pagans to say, 'See how these Christians love one another.' An early historian gives his reason for this. 'They were stedfastly adhering to the teaching of the apostles and to the Fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.' That secret still works.

(*d*) Business is left to individual discretion. The ambassador may send home full reports or brief statements. He may send valuable comments upon the way in which public opinion is moving, or he may ignore it. He may attend many social and cultural functions to show the wide interests of his king, or he may reserve himself only for formal State processions. Once appointed, he is largely his own master, which is the position for Christians to-day. Church discipline having been shelved, many find the undisciplined life too much of a temptation. We must watch our witnessing here. Unrepresentative ambassadors cause more confusion than understanding. Sir H. Rumbold makes this clear in his book upon the July crisis in 1914. The Germans sent as Ambassador to this country a prince who was genuine in his desire for friendship, and who was the sort of person whom the Germans thought would be acceptable here. But he could not represent the German mind in those fateful months. His word did not agree with others' reports (I believe he himself was bewildered), and in the confusion at the Foreign Office, his words only darkened counsel.

We must try to avoid this sort of confusion in the future as together Christ's ambassadors consider

ways of development. We must lessen the tragedy of disagreement upon the great moral issues of the day, so that we do not confound those people who as yet do not feel 'called.' Much of this confusion and many differences are minimized if they do not altogether disappear with a richer experience of the greatness of that which we represent as His ambassadors. St. Paul puts it down to personal loyalty, 'as though God were intreating by us.'

In this holy task we are encouraged by one fact which shines out so clearly amidst all the ordinariness and regimentation in the world, that personality, especially the dedicated personality, stands out. By it the world shall be saved. 'A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind.' By reason of what our Lord was, by reason of what He did, we have been reconciled to God, not reckoning unto us our trespasses. The need is still urgent. And in this work, it is the love of Christ that constrains us.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Are there not Twelve Hours in the Day?

'Are there not twelve hours in the day?'—Jn 11^{9}.

A day was soon to come when Jesus would let His enemies do with Him what they would, but that day was not yet. So, when the Jews had it in their hearts to stone Him, when He heard of their plan to arrest Him and shut His mouth, He slipped, under cover of night, across the Jordan and made His escape. And the disciples, no doubt, congratulated one another on getting away safely from a very nasty situation.

And then there came the news about Lazarus, and a message from Martha and Mary that was an appeal for help. What will He do, the twelve whispered to one another. They knew how dear that family was to Him. For two days Jesus did nothing, and it may be that the disciples guessed and were glad that safety first had become a guiding rule of their Lord. If so, they were soon shaken out of that thought, for, on the morning of the third day, Jesus quietly said, 'Let us go back to Judea again.' That staggered them. They were just ordinary men, and the danger to themselves as well as to their Master was by no means absent from their thoughts. They had never questioned His leadership before, but they felt they must do it now. 'Master,' they said, 'the Jews were trying to stone you there, only the other day. Do you really mean that you want to go back again?' Jesus answers them with a question—'Are there not twelve hours in the day?' It is a somewhat enigmatic question. What precisely was in His mind when He said that? There are two meanings the words might bear.

'Are there not twelve hours in the day?'—only twelve, no more than twelve. To every man is given his allotted span. No one can add to them. They slip by remorselessly, and none can be recalled when it is passed. One hour has been used aright or abused. It is irrevocable. For better or for worse that hour is done. Wherefore, because of that, if a man has a work to do, let him set unceasingly about it, let him fill each hour as it passes, for the moment is ever drawing nearer when his twelfth hour will strike and he can do no more.

Perhaps that was the thought in the mind of Jesus. Did He feel 'I have but My twelve hours, and no more, in which to do My work for God.' This message from Martha and Mary is a call to that work. 'I must be about My Father's business. Whatever be the risk, I must take the opportunity this hour presents. The risks are God's affair. Mine is to do His will.' Do you remember how He said, 'I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work?' Yes, that may well have been the thought that sent Him back to Judea. There was ever that sense of urgency in Him.

Here is a thought that at times at least should be confronted. It may depress us to be reminded that the sands of time are sinking, and yet that is a fact, surely too big a fact to be always ignored. 'Times of worship,' writes Dr. Sclater, 'are occasions when a man is brought face to face with the facts of his own life. In business he has no time to remember them, in pleasure his anxiety is to forget. Few men, apart from the hours of worship, ever stand and gaze before the facts of birth and death, before their own pitifulness and splendour, their transience and their permanence. Yet all men know that it is only those who take thought upon these things who grow in wisdom.' I fancy that some of us might be living differently now if the end of the journey were more often in our thoughts. When our twelfth hour draws near to striking what will comfort us? 'My dear Lockhart,' said Sir Walter Scott, on his death-bed, to his son-in-law, 'nothing can comfort a man when he comes to lie here save the consciousness that he has tried to be a good man.' Rightness in heart, in mind, in will—that is what God cares for most. How much do *we* care about it? Are we merely growing older as the days go by, or are we growing better? Again,

it would comfort a man at the end of his journey to feel that he had at least *tried* to do something for other people, had given some good cause a push forward. What is a man's pain and shame at the end of his time? Must it not be the thought of time misspent, privileges abused, the gifts and graces of God so freely offered, so little sought; the puttings off, the might-have-beens, the weak drift of his life; the selfishness, the good he left undone, the will of God known and ignored? While it is yet day with us, let us be wise. We have but twelve hours, no more.

The other meaning that may be found in the question of our Lord is that He wished, perhaps, to answer the disciples' fear that to cross the Jordan so soon again was to court disaster. And His question bids them remember that the end of His day would be determined not by His enemies, but by God. When our Lord stood silent before him Pilate said, 'Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee and power to release thee?' And this was how Jesus answered him: 'Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above. It is not you, but God who is deciding what the end of all this will be.' And even so, here, it may be, Jesus meant to tell His disciples that He would live out the day God had measured for Him. 'In the great hand of God I stand, and He will shield Me till My work for Him is done. I go to Judea at His bidding. It is for Him to decide what will happen to Me there, and what He decides is the best and wisest that can happen.' Perhaps that was the thought in our Lord's mind.

This thought should be set in our hearts and minds too. We have each our twelve hours, no more, but no less. The issues of life and death are in other hands than ours. Among the stark realities of the firing line, our soldiers came to feel that, as they wondered why this man was struck down and the other wasn't; why one miraculously escaped while his comrade so unexpectedly fell. It was driven in upon them that some overruling power controlled the issues of life and death. In many of them this led to a pagan kind of fatalism. They spoke of luck or fate as the power in control that put a man's name and number on a bullet. But, to others, this power was the God of Jesus, and they shared the thought of Jesus about there being twelve hours in their day. To each, they argued, God gives his day. He decides its ending, even as its beginning. Meanwhile, I carry on. Now this attitude, many of them have told us, gave them fortitude in the hour of danger and a strange restfulness of spirit. 'The faith we had, that we were doing the right thing'—one of them has written—'coupled with the instinct that there must be a God of good controlling things, made us, in an extraordinary way, content. I can account in no other way for the strange restfulness of spirit in our life out there.'

This attitude may be and should be ours in all the confusions and darknesses of the life we live. Our day will be long enough for the doing of the work God has sent us to do. When a man dies in his prime we tend to think of his life as unfinished, incomplete, and that thought explains the broken columns one sometimes sees in graveyards. But consider Jesus. He was a young man when He died, but His life was the most finished and complete life ever lived.

And so all these questions of what may happen to us let us leave to our Father in Heaven. Let us say with Richard Baxter,

> Lord, it belongs not to my care,
> Whether I die or live;
> To love and serve Thee is my share.[1]

[1] J. K. Thomson, *I Have Kept the Faith*, 201.

The Messianic Age.

By the Reverend H. V. Martin, M.A., B.D., Anantapur, South India.

The catastrophic happenings in Europe during the last year and a half raise in an acute form the question as to how we are to understand from the Christian standpoint the age in which we live. Within less than a generation after the World War of 1914–18, which, it was fondly imagined by many, was a war to end war, another great war has started which augurs an even more frightful catastrophe than the last, and possibly the destruction of European civilization in its present form. This immediately raises the question as to what extent the forces of evil and violence can ever be overcome in this world. Are wars to continue to the end of time? Is the Christian Church able in any way so to leaven the nations of the world that peace and progress can be assured? Or must the Church for ever in this age remain a minority group, ever and again fighting for its very existence? Is the Kingdom of God ever to come on earth, and if so, how and when?

These are vital and perplexing questions which any Christian philosophy of history must answer. In our own day Christian opinion on these matters is in a state of flux, which in itself is a cause of great weakness in the Church. It is proposed in this article to outline a thesis providing an answer to this problem, and in brief it is this:

(*a*) That the Kingdom of God, the final victory of good over evil, will not be manifested until the end of this age, at the final appearing of Jesus Christ at the Last Judgment.

(*b*) That this present age, from the Resurrection of Jesus until His final appearing, is the Messianic Age foretold in the Old Testament, and proclaimed as arrived in the New Testament.

(*c*) That this Messianic Age is to be understood as one in which two opposed powers are active, the power of the kingdom of Satan working kataleptically, and the power of the Kingdom of God working proleptically.

The Old Testament Prophecy.

The religion of Israel was one of hope, directed to the future when Yahweh should fulfil His promise of redemption for Israel and for the whole world. The boundary of the horizon of their expectation was the Day of Yahweh, a time of judgment when He would visit the transgressions of Israel upon him; to be followed by an age of blessing to describe which words failed even the most eloquent of the prophets and psalmists. At first, this expectation, upon which their whole religious faith was built, though clear in its essential meaning, was not clear in the details of its fulfilment. Gradually there came the conception of Messiah, of the righteous Remnant, of the Servant of Yahweh, of the resurrection of the dead, and of the outpouring of the Spirit, all of which were associated in some way with the coming of the Latter Days. In some prophetic descriptions of these Latter Days, earthly and material terms are used; in others, there is a wider and more exclusively spiritual emphasis. So that even within the pages of the Old Testament it is possible to discern a differentiation of the eschatological hope into two forms, a Messianic Age upon this present earth, to be followed by an everlasting Kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth.

The Inter-Testamental Differentiation.

From the literature of the period between the Testaments it is possible to see more clearly that many Jews distinguished, in their future expectations, the Kingdom of God upon earth in the form of a Messianic Age, from the final Kingdom of God in a newly-created resurrection world. The faithful remnant at the time of the coming of Messiah would enjoy with Him a reign upon earth over all their enemies; whilst the general resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgment would only take place at the close of the Messianic Age, when the final Kingdom of God would be established for ever in a new heaven and earth. The Slavonic Book of Enoch speaks of this period of the Messianic Age as one of a thousand years, though Fourth Esdras limits it to four hundred years only. In our understanding, therefore, of the preaching of Jesus we must remember that He spoke against a background of belief which did distinguish a Messianic Age from the final Kingdom of God.

The Proclamation of Jesus.

It is clear from the Gospels that Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God as in one sense 'at hand,' and in another sense as still future, to come at the end of the age. The problem is as to how Jesus conceived the relationship of the Kingdom as present to the Kingdom as future. A study of the Kingdom parables, combined with the Apostolic tradition, shows conclusively that Jesus did not conceive this relationship as one of growth, such as with the child and the man, the bud and the flower, or the seed and the tree. Nor did He conceive it in terms of Platonic idealism, whereby the present earthly form of the Kingdom is but the broken image of the perfect form in eternity. The relationship with Jesus is entirely eschatological.

In an article in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES of November 1939 I tried to emphasize that the New Testament witness is that the Eschaton, the Latter Days, and the Day of Yahweh to which the Old Testament points, has indeed arrived in the coming of Jesus. The future Kingdom of God has become present, and yet at the same time its full manifestation still lies ahead. We can only understand this paradox by introducing the category of 'Prolepsis,' namely, that the future redemptive powers of the Kingdom of God are working here and now in anticipation. It is in this sense that we can say that the Kingdom of God is now present in the form of the Messianic Age.

The Apostolic Witness.

The New Testament consistently proclaims the faith of the Early Church that the Messianic Age, foretold in the Old Testament, has actually commenced from the time of the resurrection of Jesus, and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. Jesus is the promised Messiah, and declared as such by His resurrection from the dead. In His sufferings and death He has fulfilled the rôle of the Suffering Servant of God pictured by the prophets and psalmists, and has thus redeemed man from the power and guilt of sin. He has now inaugurated the Messianic Age, of the actual advent of which the outpouring of the Spirit is the conclusive testimony. The Christian Church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, is the company of the true seed of Abram, the spiritual Israel, the faithful remnant which inherits the promises of Yahweh to His people. The way of entrance into the blessings of this Messianic Age is no longer by the works of the Mosaic Law, but by faith, and the gift of the Spirit. It is the Spirit who brings the future redemption of the Kingdom of God proleptically into the present, so that even now we are justified, reconciled, forgiven, and sanctified, risen with Christ and heirs of the Kingdom, in anticipation of our future status with God in the everlasting Kingdom.

The New Testament further emphasizes that the Messianic Age is a temporary interim period until the final appearing of Jesus in glory, for the Last Judgment and the setting up of the final Kingdom in the new heavens and earth. Though Christ by His death and resurrection has overcome all His enemies, and conquered the kingdom of Satan in which men were enslaved by sin, the old age to outward appearance still persists; sin still holds the children of men in thrall, and death still continues to wield its universal sway. In what way, then, are we to understand the victory of Christ?

The present power of evil and sin and death, in spite of the victory of Christ, is to be understood by the use of the category of 'Katalepsis.' Just as Prolepsis signifies the activity of the future in the present, so Katalepsis signifies the activity of the past in the present. The kingdom of Satan and all that it stands for was indeed overcome and conquered in the death and resurrection of Jesus; but the evil powers of that kingdom still continue to work kataleptically, until the final appearing of Jesus at the end of the age.

We shall now discuss some of the terms and words used in the New Testament which are related to these categories of Prolepsis and Katalepsis.

The Kingdom of God as Proleptically Present in this Messianic Age.

Jesus commenced His preaching, according to the Gospel of St. Mark, with the statement, 'The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand' (Mk 1^{15}). The time which is fulfilled can only mean that time to which the whole of the Old Testament points, the End-time, the Eschaton, the Day of Yahweh, the Latter Days. But in what sense are we to understand ἤγγικεν? It cannot be translated as 'come' in the ordinary sense, for which ἔρχομαι is always used. Where ἔρχομαι is used in connexion with the Kingdom, it is always referring to the future, as in the Lord's Prayer.

'ἐγγιξω' means 'to come near,' 'to approach,' in the sense of 'to reach up to' or 'to arrive at.' Two illustrations should make the meaning clear. Mt 21[1], 'When they drew nigh (ἤγγισαν) unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage,' where the sense is that they did not actually enter right into Jerusalem, but coming right up to its boundaries, they passed on to Bethphage. Similarly Ph 2[30], 'He was nigh unto (ἤγγισεν) death,' meaning that he had come to the very point of death, without however actually dying.

The future Kingdom of God has thus come right up to us, without, however, coming finally and fully in an absolute sense. It has reached from the future backwards to us in the present, without at the same time ceasing to be future. This paradox can be understood by the use of the category of Prolepsis, by which we understand that the Eschaton, which ever remains future for us, has to faith pierced into the stream of human history in the coming of Jesus in the first century A.D., and thus proleptically has become a past event.

A study of the use of the word 'προλαμβάνω,' from which the term Prolepsis is derived, brings out this meaning of action by anticipation.

(*a*) Mk 14[8]. προέλαβεν μυρίσαι τὸ σῶμά μου εἰς τὸν ἐνταφιασμόν. (See THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, November 1939, p. 89.) The woman anointed the body of Jesus in anticipation of His death, though that death had not yet come. This is proleptic action.

(*b*) 1 Co 11[21]. ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον δεῖπνον προλαμβάνει ἐν τῷ φαγεῖν. Every one taketh before other his own supper. Instead of waiting and all partaking at the same time, some were taking their supper before the others in anticipation. Here also the proleptic sense of the term is clear.

(*c*) Gal 6[1]. ἐὰν καὶ προληµφθῇ ἄνθρωπος ἔν τινι παραπτώματι. 'If a man be overtaken in a fault.' Surely here also the meaning must be, not that the man has actually committed and completed the fault, but that he was about to do it, and was caught beforehand, in anticipation.

Another important verse concerning the coming of the Kingdom is found in Mt 12[28], and Lk 11[20] from the document Q. 'If I cast out devils by the Spirit (finger) of God,' ἄρα ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. In what sense must we take the word ἔφφασεν? In the Septuagint, both ἐγγιζω and φθάνω are used to translate the Hebrew 'Naga.' 'φθάνω' itself is used seven times in the New Testament, and in each case there is the suggestion of 'arriving in anticipation' or 'coming proleptically.'

(*a*) Ro 9[31]. Ἰσραὴλ δὲ διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης, εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν. In v.[30] the word κατέλαβεν is used of the Gentiles *attaining* righteousness, whereas in v.[31], the word ἔφθασεν is used and also translated in the Authorized Version by '*attain*.' We shall discuss below the use of καταλαμβάνω, but the use of these two words immediately indicates that the Gentiles attained kataleptically what Israel did not attain proleptically. There are two contrasted forms of righteousness dealt with here, righteousness by the works of the law, and righteousness by faith. Righteousness by faith throughout the New Testament always refers to the status of the believer in the future Kingdom of God. It is this righteousness, this status which the Gentiles have attained now by faith, and this can only be understood as the proleptic attainment of the future status, in the present.

(*b*) 2 Co 10[14]. ἄχρι γὰρ καὶ ὑμῶν ἐφθάσαμεν ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. 'For we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ' (A.V.). The context shows that the meaning is that Paul had come to them with the gospel in anticipation of any others. Moffatt preserves this meaning in his translation 'I was the very first to reach you with the gospel of Christ.'

(*c*) Ph 3[16]. πλὴν εἰς ὃ ἐφθάσαμεν, τῷ αὐτῷ στοιχεῖν. 'Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.' στοιχεῖον is a small upright post set to mark a line. This mark is the σκοπός mentioned in v.[14], the target at which we are to aim for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Proleptically we have already attained this 'mark' but actually it is still ahead of us, and we are to walk in daily life towards that 'mark' which proleptically we have already reached.

(*d*) 1 Th 2[16]. ἔφθασεν δὲ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἡ ὀργὴ εἰς τέλος. 'For the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost.' εἰς τέλος in Lk 18[5] may mean 'continually,' but the close connexion of this phrase here with ἡ ὀργὴ suggests that it is not used adverbially (in which case it would be placed next to the verb) but adjectivally. τέλος means the End, the consummation of all things at the end of the world, but it also has the meaning of

something 'due.' The meaning therefore seems to be that the wrath of the End, *i.e.* the wrath which is due to fall upon the Jews at the Last Judgment, has already come upon them proleptically, in anticipation. This same idea of the Final Judgment of the End already at work is found in the Fourth Gospel.

(*e*) 1 Th 4^{15}. οὐ μὴ φθάσωμεν τοὺς κοιμηθέντας. 'We shall not prevent them which are asleep.' It is clear that this means that we need have no fear that the Messianic Kingdom on earth is still ahead and that by dying we may miss our share in its blessings. The Messianic Kingdom is here and now. But at the coming of the Lord, the final Kingdom of God will be established, and those who are asleep and those who are alive shall enter into it together. We who are alive at that Day shall not enter the Kingdom in anticipation of those asleep.

(*f*) Mt 12^{28}, Lk 11^{20}. We are now in a position to understand the use of this important text. ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς must mean that the Kingdom has come upon you proleptically, in anticipation of the future Kingdom which still lies ahead. Every use of φθάνω in the New Testament bears this meaning of coming by anticipation, the future reaching back proleptically into the present. The more emphatic word προφθάνω occurs only once, in Mt 17^{25}, where the proleptic idea is even more clear. Peter was about to ask Jesus concerning the tribute money, when Jesus forestalled him, acted in anticipation of his query and took up the subject Himself.

Thus it appears clear that both Jesus and the New Testament as a whole witness to the fact that the present age is the Messianic Age foretold in the Old Testament, and that during this age the future Kingdom of God is present proleptically. The redeeming powers of this future Kingdom are here and now working amongst men through the Spirit, acting redemptively in anticipation of the final redemption of both body and soul in the Kingdom of God which still lies ahead.

The Kingdom of Satan as Kataleptically Present in this Messianic Age.

In the Old Testament the coming of the Latter Days and the Messianic reign is connected inseparably with the overthrow of the enemies of God and all evil powers. Even the Inter-Testamental belief in a Messianic Kingdom, separate from the final Kingdom of God, includes the conviction of the suppression and conquest of opposing powers during that age. This must have been one of the fundamental intellectual difficulties of the Jew confronted with the message of Jesus and the witness of the Apostolic Church. The Second Epistle of Peter (3^{4}) reflects this problem. For how can the Messianic Age have come seeing that all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation? Sin and sorrow and suffering and death still continue. Wrong in every shape and form still triumphs, and the righteous man is still not vindicated in his rectitude. The kingdoms of the world continue to oppress and subjugate the people of God, and Israel is still in bondage. How then can the glorious reign of Messiah have come?

Let us consider what answer the New Testament gives to this difficulty. It at once admits the fact that to all outward appearances things are as they have always been; and sin and death still continue their sway. 'The whole world lieth in wickedness' (1 Jn 5^{19}). But with the coming of Jesus Christ a new fact has emerged. 'The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil' (1 Jn 3^{8}). We who believe in Him are delivered from the kingdom of Satan. 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son' (Col 1^{13}). Christ in His Cross and Resurrection has overcome the evil powers of the world. 'And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it' (Col 2^{15}). The death of Christ has destroyed the power of Satan over men. 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil' (He 2^{14}).

The fundamental belief of the Jews, based as it is upon the Old Testament, is therefore confirmed, namely, that the coming of the Messianic Kingdom necessarily implies the overcoming and nullifying of the powers of evil. How then to explain the apparent continuance of these powers of evil even after the Resurrection of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit? Is Satan really overcome? Has sin really been conquered? Has death indeed been vanquished? The New Testament answer is a victorious and triumphant 'Yes.' 'No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house' (Mk 3^{27}). Christ has come and Satan is overcome sin is atoned

for, and death vanquished. How is this to be explained?

Karl Heim puts it in this way, that Christ has 'entrechtet' Satan on the Cross, but will 'entmächtigen' him only by His Second Coming. Taking, however, our previous suggestion that we are to understand the Kingdom of God as having come in Christ proleptically, we must say in like manner that Christ has indeed destroyed the power of the kingdom of Satan, and that the present continued manifestation of that power of evil is to be conceived only as kataleptic action.

Katalepsis denotes the opposite of Prolepsis. Just as Prolepsis in relation to the Kingdom of God means that the redeeming power of the future works in the present, so Katalepsis means that the evil power of the kingdom of Satan, though overcome and destroyed in the past, still continues its apparent sway into the present. The kingdom of Satan only exists kataleptically in this present age. The medical term 'catalepsy' suggests on another level what is meant here. Catalepsy is the state of a person whose vital faculties are in a state of suspension, who though existing physically in the present, mentally or partially exists in the past only, as though time had stayed still.

Its meaning can be further explained from the use of the word καταλαμβάνω in the New Testament, where it is used fifteen times. It has three main shades of meaning:

(1) To capture or seize firmly (Mk 9^{18}).

(2) To perceive or comprehend (Jn 1^{5}, Ac 4^{13}).

(3) To seize from behind.

It is in this third sense that the word indicates true kataleptic action, and a few texts may be considered:

(*a*) Jn $8^{3.4}$. γυναῖκα ἐν μοιχείᾳ κατειλημμένην . . . αὕτη ἡ γυνὴ κατελήφθη ἐπαυτοφώρῳ μοιχευομένη. This is usually taken in the simple sense of 'seized' or 'caught.' But the word ἐπαυτοφώρῳ 'in the very act' suggests that though the act of adultery had taken place they were caught still together, 'lost to the outside world' as we should say. It was as though time stood still. Their seizure therefore may be understood as kataleptic action.

(*b*) Jn 12^{35}. ἵνα μὴ σκοτία ὑμᾶς καταλάβῃ, 'lest darkness come upon you.' With this should be taken Jn 1^{5}, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν, 'the darkness did not master it' (Moffatt). The coming of Jesus is compared to the light which dispels the darkness. The darkness of Satan's realm is overcome by the light of the coming of the Kingdom of Messiah. How then does it still persist? How can it come upon any one from behind? It can only do so kataleptically. The darkness of sin and death is past, destroyed and dispelled by the light of Jesus in His Incarnation and Resurrection. The present power of this darkness can thus only be understood as kataleptic.

(*c*) Ph 3^{12}. διώκω δὲ εἰ καὶ καταλάβω, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. 'I follow after, if that I may apprehend (kataleptically) that for which also I am apprehended (kataleptically) by Christ Jesus.' This whole passage is strongly eschatological. 'That I may win Christ.' 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.' 'If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.'

Here the coming of the Eschaton in Christ is viewed as past, as it pierced decisively into history in the Resurrection. Paul is seized from behind, from the past, by Christ in the power of His resurrection as a past event. Paul seeks to seize likewise from the past the redemption wrought by Christ in His coming upon earth. Here the kataleptic power of the Resurrection righteousness as available for believers is made clear.

(*d*) 1 Th 5^{4}. ὑμεῖς δὲ ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σκότει, ἵνα ἡ ἡμέρα ὑμᾶς ὡς κλέπτης καταλάβῃ. 'That that day should overtake you as a thief.' Here also the Eschaton is conceived as past. The Day is the Day of Yahweh, the day of judgment, the Eschaton which pierced into the stream of human history with the historical coming of Christ. In this sense the day of judgment is past, but judgment still operates kataleptically until the final manifestation of Jesus. Thus that day overtakes, that is, seizes kataleptically, those who have not advanced into the future Kingdom of God by faith.

The Eschaton therefore may be considered in two ways: firstly, as already come in the past proleptically in the first coming of Jesus; secondly, as still to come in the final Advent of Christ which lies ahead. In considering the Eschaton as future, προλαμβάνω is used; in considering it as past, καταλαμβάνω is used.

The Messianic Age.

This present age, therefore, from the Resurrection of Christ until His final manifestation at the

end of the world, is controlled by the interaction of two powers, the power of the future Kingdom of God working proleptically, and the power of the past kingdom of Satan working kataleptically. Only at the final consummation of all things will this kataleptic power of evil cease, when the already accomplished victory of Christ will be openly and conclusively manifested in the establishment of the eternal Kingdom of God in the new heavens and new earth.

In this Messianic Age there is no essential progress or development towards the final Kingdom of God. The New Testament gives no place to optimistic humanism with its doctrine of inevitable evolution. The powers of evil will continue to work until the end. Again and again we see in the past two thousand years how the demonic forces of the kingdom of Satan have risen up against the forces of righteousness and justice. But we see also that such evil forces can never completely overcome the forces of the Kingdom of God. They rise like great waves in increasing power, but reaching their peak, they break themselves upon the shore of the Kingdom of God, only to recede and rise again.

Likewise the redeeming powers of the Kingdom of God strive against the evil powers of the world, and again and again achieve a partial victory. But such victories are only fragmentary actualizations of righteousness and justice, and after a period the forces of evil again rise and corrupt them. Thus the process of human history in this age is to be understood not only as evolution but also as revolution. Any true Christian philosophy of history must take into account these two forces, and the inability of the one ever finally to overcome the other on the stage of human history.

To-day, we stand at another great crisis in the affairs of man, when a new Kairos is upon us. The demonic forces of evil, represented by the Totalitarian powers, are on the rise, whilst the forces of the Kingdom of God, represented by the Christian Church in the widest sense, seem on the wane. It may be that the world may be about to witness another Dark Age, with the temporary submersion of those values which form the outward mark of the Christian heritage. On the other hand, the very violence of the waves of evil may cause them to break all the more quickly and completely, so that the forces of righteousness may rise in reflex power.

In either case, the Christian hope is sure, that at the end the Kingdom of God will prevail. The kingdom of Satan may appear outwardly powerful, but we know that actually it lives only in kataleptic action. In the final manifestation of the Kingdom of God, all such evil powers shall be destroyed for ever. When and how that final manifestation will come we do not know. To our finite and time-bound minds it is a paradox. The end of history is not an event of history, and yet it brings history to a close. To those steeped in the outlook of the New Testament, the Kingdom of God will not be conceived as a timeless eternity abiding above the world, nor as a temporal event to come within the historical process. The end of the world is the manifestation of the full redemption of body and soul, and of the whole creation, in a new world which is beyond description. A redeemed humanity demands a redeemed creation for its environment. This God has promised and will surely bring to pass. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him' (1 Co 2^9).

Contributions and Comments.

Can a Hymn be a Poem?

In Lord David Cecil's recent *Oxford Book of Christian Verse* there are three hundred and fifty-two poems, but not one in ten is a hymn. Yet there are about half a million Christian hymns, and a goodly number might be expected to find a place in a collection of *Christian* poems. So an old question is raised again: Why are hymns seldom poems?

In the last century there was a Professor of Poetry at Oxford at the time when Palgrave's *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics* and Roundell Palmer's *Book of Praise* were published. The story runs that one day he brought the two books

to his class and asked, 'Why is it that there is hardly an item in Palgrave that is not poetry, and hardly an item in Palmer that is?' It is not easy to define a poem, but few will dispute his verdict. It is easier to define a hymn. Almost all hymns are 'verse' that is meant to be sung by a company of people in the worship of God. The Professor might have posed a second question: 'Why is it that in Palgrave there are scarcely any items that are sung by groups of people and in Palmer scarcely any that are not?' It should be noted that it is not the song of individuals that is in question, but of groups. Palgrave has a great number of poems that could be sung by individuals, though it is remarkable that, even in a book of *Songs*, few are in fact often sung. The author had to add the word 'Lyrics.' In theory every lyric is meant to be sung, but in practice most of them are read and not sung, and it is probable that many a poet knew that this would be so. This is not the only instance where poets have divorced a particular poetic 'form' from its original occasion. In the introduction to his *Dynasts* Thomas Hardy as much as says that he has chosen the dramatic form for his poem, but that he does not expect it to be put on the stage. Yet it is true that a good many songs, which are sung as solos, are true poems. There is a good instance in ballads. The best ballads are true poems, and the minstrel both made and sang them. Yet few even of these are ever sung by large companies of people. And, as to 'popular songs' in general, are they ever poems? What about 'Roll out the Barrel,' for instance? It is perhaps noteworthy that Shakespeare included in his Plays a number of songs for individual actors to sing, but that when, in one of his roistering scenes, he sets a *group* singing, there is nothing more than a 'stage direction'—'They sing a catch.' The dramatist knew better than to write a 'catch.' There have been a few great poets who have tried to write hymns—Milton, for instance—but they have not 'framed' well at it, as Northerners say. The fact is that when groups of people sing, whether in a church or an inn, they do not 'take to' poems. Lord David counts Donne the greatest English Christian poet—a very disputable judgment—but none of Donne's poems could be sung, even by a soloist.

It is generally agreed that Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley are the greatest English hymn-writers. Lord David's selection from their writings is instructive. From Watts he has 'Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,' 'Where-e'er my flatt'ring passions rove,' 'No, 'tis in vain to seek for bliss,' 'O God, our help in ages past,' and 'Sweet Muse, descend and bless the shade.' Only one of these is a true hymn. From Charles Wesley we find 'Jesu, Lover of my soul' (which his brother John left out of his hymn-book as being too familiar with Christ!), 'Come, O Thou Traveller unknown,' 'Times without number have I pray'd,' 'Still, O Lord, for Thee I tarry,' 'Christ, Whose glory fills the skies,' and 'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild.' Here there are three hymns that have passed into general use, but who except the Methodists ever sang, 'Come, O Thou Traveller'? Yet it is usually counted Charles Wesley's greatest *poem*. It is, indeed, a peerless poem, for it puts Paul into song, as no other poet has ever done, but it needs pondering, and the singing of hymns does not and cannot give time to ponder. Indeed, one may ask: Is there such a thing as a great poem that can rightly be *read* quickly (to say nothing of song, where the music needs attention as well as the verse)?

Lord David, who is perhaps a trifle 'sniffy' about hymn-writers, has his own explanation of the rarity of poetry in hymns. For instance, he says that a hymn-writer 'does not say what he really feels, but what he thinks he ought to feel.' Yet surely there are many hymns where these two coincide. This is common, for instance, in Charles Wesley. Again, one can only marvel at the phrase 'Evangelicalism, with its emphasis . . . on original sin, redemption by Christ's blood, final perdition,' for 'evangelical' hymns on each of these three are rare, though for different reasons. Lord David does not say outright that he agrees with the current idea that every true poem must say something *new*, though he seems sometimes to share it. There is an older idea—that a poet must say something *well*. In older anthologies a place was always found for Gray's 'Elegy,'—but to-day it seems to be 'the thing' to sneer at it, on the ground that its thought is commonplace. Yet its merit precisely is that it puts some of the ordinary thoughts of ordinary men into poetry. For instance, the ordinary man would never have discovered its epithets for himself, yet he knows that they are just 'right.' To take one example, he would never have thought of describing the common lot of many men as a '*sequestered* vale,'—yet the phrase hits the mark. Again, it is not true that the greatest poets avoid the commonplaces of their time. Dante, for instance, has many unexpected descriptions and surprising phrases, but these have to do with detail. The groundwork of his whole poem is the account of Heaven and Purgatory and Hell current in the Middle Ages. Similarly, a true hymn expresses some

great Christian truth or 'commonplace,' for it is by 'commonplace' truths that men live, but this is not the chief reason why a hymn is so rarely a poem. 'Jesu, Lover of my soul' is a poem because it expresses a great Christian commonplace well. It has spontaneity, but not novelty. Lord David himself says as much in his account of Donne, who dealt with 'original sin' and 'final perdition' far more nearly exclusively than any Evangelical hymn-writer. Yet Donne was a poet. The truth is that the few people who read poetry regularly, usually read it slowly and solitarily, with many a pause to flavour a phrase—and these things are not possible when a group sets itself to sing, whether in a church or an inn. It is true that by a 'happy accident' Shakespeare's plays were popular, but how many of the Tudor playgoers were aware that they were listening to literature?

Two other illustrations of the difficulty of combining poetry and hymnody may be added. In two anthologies of German lyrics that the present writer happens to have at his elbow, a beginning is made with Luther, and, in the period before Goethe, there is a strange mixture of hymns and drinking-songs. The church and the inn! Yet it may be doubted whether these 'lyrics' rise to the height of poetry. Again, when Church Committees meet to draw up hymn-books, not infrequently they alter, not to say 'bowdlerise,' the words in some of the hymns. When they make changes, they may almost be relied upon to delete the poetical. For instance, in the great Scottish Version of the Hundredth Psalm, only a Committee would have changed 'Serve Him with mirth' into 'Serve Him with fear.' Or again, there is a modern hymn-book where, in Charles Wesley's lines:

> 'Now, Lord, let every bounding heart
> The mighty comfort feel,'

'bounding' is changed to 'waiting.' The Committee was thinking of the average member of an average congregation. Or again, it may be debated whether Addington Symonds' lines beginning 'These things shall be' is a hymn, but most will count it a poem. Yet Hymn-book Committees boggle at 'young-eyed joys' and 'undiscordant noise.' The last phrase, of course, is meant to suggest that in the end the 'noises' of the world will pass into music, but a Committee prefers the redundancy of 'undiscordant song'—as if any song could be discordant and remain a song! One would like to hear Symonds on the change!

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Zechariah xiv. 5.

The following note is intended to draw attention to two pieces of information about this difficult verse which are contained in the *Seder 'Olam* and which may not be generally known. Before mentioning these two facts, it may perhaps be useful to recall summarily a few details about the *Seder 'Olam* itself, since the work, in spite of its importance and the number of times that it has been edited[1] and elucidated, has not received the attention that is its due.

Seder 'Olam is the proper title of the earliest Hebrew post-biblical chronicle or chronology, commonly, since the ninth century, called *Seder 'Olam Rabbah*, to distinguish it from the later *Seder 'Olam Zuṭa*. *The Seder 'Olam* is cited in the Mishnah and in the Babylonian Talmud; indirectly, it seems also to be cited in the Jerusalem Talmud. It is a chronological survey of history from the Creation down to the time of Bar Kochba. But the original text probably ended at the period of Alexander the Great. The last chapter, which very briefly covers the interval between Alexander and Hadrian, is considered to be a later addition. The Talmud ascribes the authorship to Jose b. Ḥalafta, but it is now generally held that Jose, who was one of Akiba's pupils and whose activity began after 135, was not the author but the redactor who brought the work up to date. The *Seder 'Olam* sometimes knows a biblical text which differs both from the M.T. and from citations in the Talmuds. For this reason its evidence is of value as giving independent testimony to the Hebrew Bible, and the present note may be regarded as an example of the help to be derived from this source.

Zec 14[5] ('and ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains,' E.V.) is a well-known difficulty, which it is not the purpose of this note to discuss. It suffices to say that the difficulty is, by most scholars, held to be solved by pointing *ve-nastem* ('and ye shall flee') as *ve-nistam* ('and the valley shall be stopped up') thrice in the verse.

Further, while it is generally recognized that Zec 1–8 and 9–14 are the work of different writers, there is considerable difference of opinion with regard to the latter section, its date and homogeneity: possibly further sub-division is necessary. These questions have been admirably dealt with, and the opinions of Nowack, Marti, and others,

[1] The most useful editions are: (1) B. Ratner, Wilna, 1897; (2) A. Neubauer, in *Mediæval Jewish Chronicles, Anecdota Oxon.*, Vol. I, part vi. Oxford, 1895. Ratner's great *Introduction* is a separate volume.

summarized, by the late Professor W. E. Barnes in his edition of Zechariah in the *Cambridge Bible Series*.

The two pieces of information that *Seder 'Olam* has to offer are:

I. It confirms the pointing *ve-nistam* ('and shall be stopped') which LXX and Targum presuppose. If the *Seder 'Olam* is to be dated after Hadrian, such evidence as to the Hebrew text would be early and valuable: if, as is generally felt, the *Seder 'Olam* was originally composed just after Alexander's death, then this testimony to the Hebrew text antedates that of the LXX.

II. It regards Zec 14 as a separate entity, the work of a writer contemporary with Isaiah.

Now it has often been suggested, (1) that short prophecies and anonymous writings were written consecutively in a Scroll without any space intervening between the end of one and the beginning of the next; (2) that the practice accounts for the subsequent combination of separate works and their ascription to a single author. This is what the *Seder 'Olam* implies. Zec 14 stands by itself as an independent work.

The date of this portion of Zechariah (9–14) is notoriously a matter of controversy. The advocates of a late date pin their faith to Yavan in 9^{13}. Barnes has shown that their arguments are weak and that the date of these chapters is very difficult to determine. But whatever be the value of inferences drawn from Yavan, it is irrelevant to the date of 14, if 14 be an independent prophecy, since Yavan occurs in 9^{13}. The *Seder 'Olam* is influenced by a very striking feature, namely, the reference to the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah.

At this juncture, the passage in *Seder 'Olam* may be cited. It occurs in a context which deals with the prophets and is to be found in ch. 20 (ed. Ratner, *f.* 40*a*: ed. Neubauer, p. 51):

'Since the Scripture says:
"And the valley of my mountains shall be stopped . . . as in the earthquake" (Zec 14^5),
"The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz" (Is 1^1),
"The word of the Lord to Hosea" (Hos 1^1),
"The words of Amos" (Am 1^1),
"The word of the Lord to Micah" (Mic 1^1),
we can infer that they all prophesied at one period. But it is not possible to determine which came first. But since it says "The beginning of the Lord's speech to Hosea"; and since, with regard to Amos, it says "two years before the earthquake"; and since, with regard to Isaiah, it says "In the year of King Uzziah's death"—which death took place on the day of the earthquake, for "the pillars of the thresholds were shaken"; and since "the word of the Lord came to Micah in the days of Jotham," we can infer that all the others prophesied before Micah.'

For the interpretation of this passage the reader is referred to Ratner's excellent notes, where all the parallels, variants, later citations and comments are collected. From these it is clear that the earthquake in Uzziah's reign was regarded as a fixed point in chronology. It is curious that, so far as the present writer sees, notice has not been taken of the fact that neither Kings nor Chronicles records the earthquake, the occurrence of which there would seem to be no reason for doubting. The inference would be that these Scriptural sources, being concerned primarily with religion, do not always mention events from which no special religious lesson is to be drawn. None the less, the Prophets regarded the earthquake as a convenient date, well known to all and liable to no ambiguity.

The *Seder 'Olam* groups into one period the Prophets who mention the earthquake or who lived roughly at that time. Amos prophesied 'two years before the earthquake': Isaiah, on the very day of the earthquake. Micah, whose activity began in the reign of Jotham, Uzziah's successor, was obviously the latest of the Prophets, while Hosea was the earliest. For Hosea also belongs to the reign of Uzziah and the difficult phrase in 1^2, which is masked in the A.V. rendering 'The beginning of the word . . . by Hosea,' is explained as 'the beginning (of prophecy was) the word of the Lord by Hosea.'

But what about Zec 14^5? Why does the *Seder 'Olam* begin with this verse? Because it connects it with 2 Ch 26^5, which relates that Uzziah was guided by 'Zechariah who had understanding . . . (*ham-Mebhin*).' This Zechariah is never mentioned elsewhere. Ratner shows that Zechariah *ham-Mebhin* is differentiated in *Seder 'Olam* from Zechariah 'the prophet, who wrote Zechariah 9.' It was the former who wrote Zec 14. The commentator *'Eṣ Yoseph* first questioned the relevance of Zec 14^5 to the list in *Seder 'Olam*: *'Ebhen Sappir* showed that the *Seder 'Olam* took *ve-nastem* as *ve-nistam* and interpreted 'valley' and 'the mountains' as referring to prophecy and prophets. It is clear that the *Seder 'Olam* regards Zec 14—possibly beginning at *v.*^{5} but this is not certain—

as an independent section. For in the case of the other prophets, the first verse of the prophecy is cited and then, when the proof-text is needed, such other verse as indicates the period when the prophet lived.

The question whether Zec 14 is to be assigned to an early date is exceedingly difficult and this is not the place to discuss it: the suggestion of the *Seder 'Olam* is indeed revolutionary. But if the early date of the *Seder 'Olam* itself is admitted, such evidence is well worth consideration. For if, as is generally held, it was first written after the death of Alexander the Great, it is not far removed from the Books of Chronicles, which contain the only reference to Zechariah *ham-Mebhin* whom the *Seder 'Olam* regards as responsible for Zec 14.

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Entre Nous.

The Cry of Dereliction.

Professor H. H. Farmer's sermon for Passion Sunday, in the February EXPOSITORY TIMES, and, in particular, the paragraph—'What then of the cry of dereliction?' suggests the question: Do we make sufficient allowance in our devotional meditations at Passiontide for the *physical* causes and consequences in the experience of Jesus upon the Cross?

I pass by the familiar fact that the Cry of Dereliction was, *inter alia*, a quotation from the Old Testament—Ps 22, just as the Last of the Seven Words was a quotation from Ps 31; but I cannot pass by the tragic fact in the history of science that, in the days before anæsthetics, a physical operation had, as one of its concomitants, a profound psychical depression. Before Sir James Y. Simpson introduced the blessed era of chloroform, Dr. John Wilson had to have one of his feet amputated, and he has recorded his experience as follows:

'During the operation, in spite of the pain it occasioned, my senses were preternaturally acute. I watched all that the surgeons did with a fascinated intensity. Of the agony it occasioned, I will say nothing. Suffering so great as I underwent cannot be expressed in words, and thus fortunately cannot be recalled. The particular pangs are now forgotten; *but the black whirlwind of emotion, the horror of great darkness, and the sense of desertion by God and man, bordering close upon despair, which swept through my mind and overwhelmed my heart, I can never forget.*'

The italics are mine, but, surely, to thoughtful devotion the experience described sheds a valuable light upon the experience of the Sufferer on the Central Cross. If such a sense of 'Desertion' was engendered by amputation, surely crucifixion could mean no less. Hence the Cry of Desertion should deepen our reverent sympathy with what the noble paraphrase calls 'The pangs of the Man of Sorrows,' and heighten our adoring gratitude to the Divine Love, that bore them 'for us men and our salvation.'

JAMES W. GARDNER.

Largs.

'Follow Me!'

'"And they went to another village." Dear brethren, each time the Lord Jesus Christ starts out to continue His journey, the men and women who have come into contact with Him are faced with the problem of starting out with Him, or remaining where they are—without Him. . . .

'The Lord Jesus Christ . . . is no longer tolerated in public life, in the press or in the lecture rooms, and the youth organizations and training camps have cast Him out. The end of the Christian era has been solemnly proclaimed, and within a short time this proclamation will become a reality in every way. This is something that should not surprise us; Luther and many others before him prophesied it. This is the situation described in the phrase: "He went into another village."

'For some time past a carved wooden figure of Christ has stood in my study. I call it the "Oeynhausen Christ," because the artist, who took part in the Oeynhausen Synod, first saw Him there before his inward eye. The carving shows the Lord, who is bowed down beneath the weight of an invisible cross, setting out bent and sad from the Church where the congregation refuse Him obedience; for where that happens, He can no longer stay. The artist's eye had seen aright what the ears of the disciples heard: "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" . . .

'We love our nation: we must love it—we cannot and dare not and must not do otherwise.

But when things change so that the sword "reaches unto our soul," when the Lord Jesus Christ calls, then we must tear ourselves free of the environment that has denied Him. Many a young Christian who has heard the Lord Jesus Christ being slandered in the training camp has refused to listen and has said: "I will go out and help Him to bear the cross and the shame." . . .'[1]

Light.

'And the other picture which the Lord Jesus Christ holds up to us: "Ye are the light of the world": we hear these words and are reminded by them that we worry about something that ceases to exist in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. What are we worrying about? When I read out the names, a little while ago, did we not think: "Alas and alack, will this wind, this storm, that is going through the world just now, not blow out the Gospel candle? We must therefore take the message in out of the storm and put it in a safe nook."

'It is only during these days that I have realized —that I have understood—what the Lord Jesus Christ means when He says: "Do not take up the bushel! I have not lit the candle for you to put it under the bushel, in order to protect it from the wind. Away with the bushel! The light should be placed upon a candlestick! It is not your business to worry about whether the light is extinguished or not by the draught." We are not to worry whether the light is extinguished or not; that is His concern: we are only to see that the light is not hidden away—hidden away perhaps with a noble intent, so that we may bring it out again in calmer times—no: "Let your light shine before men!"

'Brothers and sisters, that is the strange pass to which we have been brought to-day. It has come to this: we are being accosted on all sides, by statesmen as well as by "the man in the street," who tell us: "For God's sake, do not speak so loudly or you will land in prison. Pray do not speak so plainly: surely you can also say all that in a more obscure fashion!" Brothers and sisters, we are *not allowed* to put our light under a bushel: if we do so, we are disobedient; but we have received our commission from Him Who is the light of the world. He does not need us as wicks, He can take other wicks as well, other men on whom He can set up His light as on a candlestick.'[2]

[1] M. Niemöller, *The Gestapo Defied*, 16 ff.
[2] *Ibid.*, 242.

Rejoice.

'A young academician, who has been in prison for weeks, writes to his people as follows: "Be cheerful and of good courage and do not worry about me. It is Advent, you know, and every evening, when the noise of the day dies away, I can hear the carillon from the parish church: Ye gates, lift up your heads on high. Nothing has changed—truly nothing—since Paul wrote from prison to the Philippians, Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice."'[3]

Children of Dockland.

What drove Nan Goodall from her college at Oxford to spend years in the heart of a Dockland parish where the air is fetid, pavements filthy, and no loveliness anywhere? In *Children of Dockland* (S.P.C.K., 2s. net) she gives the answer.

'All that we can do, all that we can teach, is not one hundredth part of what we owe these people, but their right, for we have stolen their inheritance. We must atone not only to them, but to the Crucified, for all that we have done and, more, for all that we have left undone. That is the motive power that has driven us on through our Dockland years, sent us to live among them and share their lives as nearly as we can.'

How can people be taught who are so limited, so unable to understand even the simplest thing outside their own experience? 'Many cannot write one legible sentence.' Much may be learnt from this small book about methods of approach. Here is one quotation: 'We bought an electric projector which will throw any picture, in colour, on to a white sheet, and in Holy Week we began our teaching mission in earnest. . . . The lantern was behind the sheet and we put on gaily coloured scenery. In the beam of the lantern stood those acting, all members of the Mothers' Union, and their shadows fell jet black against the coloured background. A narrator read the simple Bible story as the figures moved, and, from time to time a hidden choir sang a hymn. The audience sat spellbound.'

The attractive photographs are by the author's husband, the vicar of the parish.

[3] *Ibid.*, 58.

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